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ANCIENT KURUKṢETRA

Studies in Historical & Cultural Geography

ANCIENT KURUKṢETRA

STUDIES IN HISTORICAL & CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

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To the memory

of

My Revered Father

Late Shri B.R. Bharadwaj

(1901—1984)

INTRODUCTION

A Chair in the name of Maharshi Veda Vyasa was set up by the Haryana State Govt. for a term of five years at the Kurukshetra University with the objective of preparing a Historical Geography of Ancient Haryana on the basis of the Mahābhārata and all other relevant material apart from Vedic and post-Vedic literature. The author was offered the assignment and he joined as Professor of Indology in September 1985 with the hope of devoting himself exclusively to research work. This was not to be.

His long judicial and administrative experience led to the author's unsolicited involvement in additional administrative work of the University resulting in heavy encroachment on his academic activities. Out of his five-year term he had to look after the additional work of the Registrar, Principal Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor, Director of the Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies and Member of the Unfair Means Committee, apart from sundry other jobs of miscellaneous nature, for almost four years. Shedding one additional position always meant its replacement by another. Only around the last year of his tenure was he free from extra burden, but unfortunately through an adverse turn of situation that deprived him of the basic requirements for carrying on his researches. In the result the work on the Historical Geography of Ancient Haryana still remains to be completed after his retirement from the Chair. It will be continued as his labour of love, albeit without adequate facilities.

History of Ancient India opens in the land of Kurukṣetra, now called Haryana. It is the traditional 'Seat of Creation' and 'Cradle of Indian Culture and Civilisation'. Bulk of the Vedic literature and many early Sanskrit works, including the Ṛgveda, often described as the oldest available testament of the Aryans, and the Great Epic Mahābhārata, were composed here. The valleys of the sacred rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī resounded with the first chantings of Vedic mantras and witnessed the evolution of moral and ethical values which were declared by Manu as worthy of emulation by humanity all over the world.

Study of history rightly begins with the proper perspective of its geographical background. In this regard the remote past of the hallowed land of Kurukṣetra

required to be cleared of much mist of confusion. Many geographical names awaited identification and habitats of peoples and tribes needed to be defined. The task looked rather formidable when, about twenty years ago, the author took up the challenge. Happily, the commitment has largely been fulfilled through exhaustive studies of various topics published in reputed research journals and felicitation/commemoration volumes. Twenty of these studies were brought out in 1986 under the title "Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India." This second collection contains nine studies, covering topics relating to historical as well as cultural geography.

The first paper examines the three names, Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala with a view to removing the confusion over their geographical connotation. It is shown that the first two were almost co-terminous in the Vedic age and larger than the present state of Haryana, extending virtually upto the Sutlej in the north-west and reaching beyond Gaṅgā in the east. For some time the Kuru kingdom embraced a slightly larger area while Kurukṣetra gradually shrank in extent till it came to denote first the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab, and more recently only the Thanesar tīrtha-complex. Kurujāṅgala, on the other hand, was the north-eastern part of Kurukṣetra, having the Jagadhari-Saharanpur tract as its central portion. The second offers decisive identification of the Vedic Sarasvatī with the present Ghaggar-Hakra river. The source of the river lay above the permanent snow-line in the Himalayan glaciers in the Ṛgvedic age and shifted down to Plakṣa-Prāsravaṇa or Lavasa in Pachhad as a result of the Great Deluge before the compilation of the Atharvaveda. In the next paper it is conclusively established that the course now followed by the Western Jumna Canal from the Dadupur head-works onward is the original bed of the Ṛgvedic Aśmanvatī-Dṛṣadvatī river which is the present Somb. While in its upper reaches this bed runs quite close to the Yamunā at the lower end it merges in the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar after being joined by the Chautang—probably the Vedic Āpayā. The combined stream vanishes in the sands near Kalibangan which is the probable site of Vinaśana.

The fourth article takes note of the references to the Kurus and Kurukṣetra in the Upaniṣads with suitable explanatory notes while the fifth describes the proselytising activities of the Buddha in the land of the Kurus, noting the different places visited and the various sermons delivered by him. This was intended to be only a prelude to a book-length study which, time and health permitting, should appear in due course. The next paper highlights the direct association of Kurukṣetra with as many as eight out of ten incarnations of Viṣṇu which reflects its pre-eminence amongst the earliest religious centres of the country. The seventh paper examines and refutes Prof. V.S. Agrawala's theory of denigration of Kurukṣetra in the Mahābhārata and the eighth draws attention to the existence of apocryphal tīrtha-names in Kurukṣetra with three specific illustrations provided by the names Sudina, Ahan and Ilāspada, adopted from expressions used in the

Ṛgveda. The last paper traces the origin and development of Yakṣa worship with special reference to its form, centres and extent of prevalence in Kurukṣetra.

No effort has been spared to make these studies worthy of attention of learned scholars and it is hoped that this volume will receive their appreciation and prove useful in the reconstruction of the remote past of our ancient land. Each study is supported with copious notes and references from sources covering the vast range of early literature, mediaeval accounts, archaeological reports, gazetteers and other official records and earlier researches in the field. A map of ancient Kurukṣetra and nine plates have been added to enhance the usefulness of the volume.

The credit for setting up Maharshi Veda Vyasa Chair goes, in the first place, to the Haryana State Government. The author is therefore grateful to them for making these studies possible. That the author has been able to carry on his work in spite of many handicaps is largely due to the help of his friends and colleagues. The renowned scholar, Prof. Jagannath Agrawal has been a constant source of inspiration and the author's gratitude to his revered Guru cannot be adequately expressed in words. The author is grateful to Shri K.S. Dalal, Librarian, Kurukshetra University, for meeting all his requirements of books and periodicals, occasionally even by making arrangement with other libraries. The author is beholden to eminent scholars and his learned friends and associates for their help and encouragement from time to time. In this regard he would like to mention particularly Dr. Lokesh Chandra, Dr. K.R. Norman, Dr. (Mrs.) Kapila Vatsyayana, Dr. K.D. Bajpai, Prof. Ajay Mitra Shastri, Dr. J.L. Brockington, Dr. B.Ch. Chhabra, Dr. Ram Gopal, Shri Devendra Handa, Dr. Ashvini Agrawal, Shri R.C. Agrawala and Shri K.D. Sethna.

The author would like to place on record his warm appreciation of the generous help and assistance provided by Dr. (Miss) Swarna Prabha, Research Assistant and all other staff members of his Department. He also thankfully acknowledges his debt to learned scholars whose works he has consulted and craves their indulgence to any inadvertent errors and omissions in the exhaustive Notes and References and a fairly comprehensive Bibliography. And it is gratifying for him to add that despite her reluctance to be mentioned it is his wife Yashoda Bharadwaj who enabled him to devote himself exclusively to his academic pursuits.

Last but not the least the author would like to thank Shri Manjit Singh, the enthusiastic and enterprising proprietor of M/s. Harman Publishing House, New Delhi for readily taking up and bringing out this volume in record time and making a really decent job of it.

Vijayā Daśamī
September 29, 1990.

O.P. BHARADWAJ

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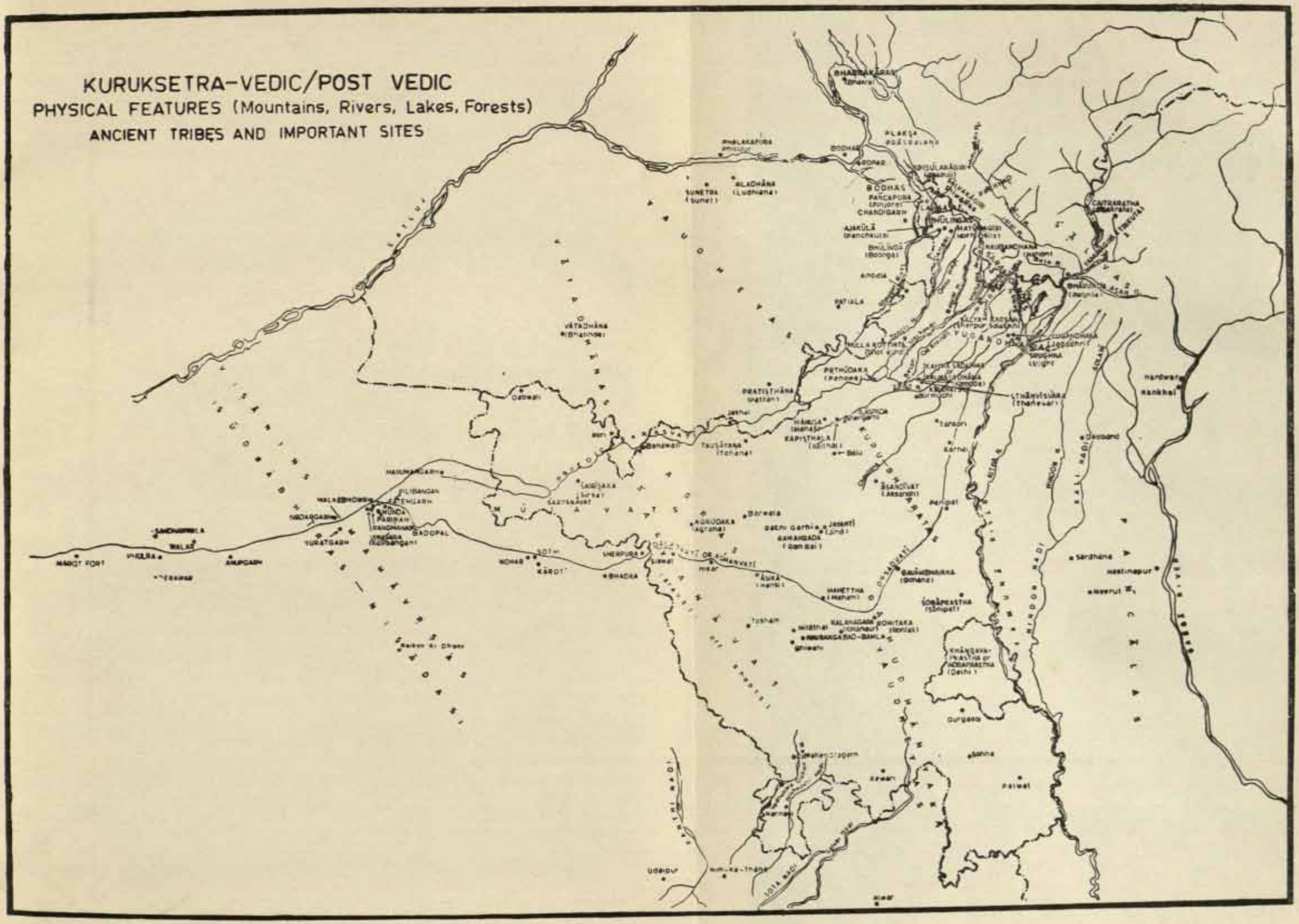
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अ	a	क	ka	ढ	dha	र	ra
आ	ā	ख	kha	ण	ṇa	ल	la
इ	i	ग	ga	त	ta	व	va
ई	ī	घ	gha	थ	tha	श	śa
उ	u	ङ	ṅa	द	da	ष	ṣa
ऊ	ū	च	ca	ध	dha	स	sa
ऋ	ṛ	छ	cha	न	na	ह	ha
ए	e	ज	ja	प	pa		
ऐ	ai	झ	jha	फ	pha		
ओ	o	ञ	ña	ब	ba		
औ	au	ट	ṭa	भ	bha		
अं	ṁ/ṃ	ठ	ṭha	म	ma		
अः	ḥ	ड	ḍa	य	ya		

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1

THE KURUS, KURUKṢETRA AND KURUJĀṄGALA

There is much confusion among scholars about the geographical definition of the names Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala. The Kurus, sometimes described as "Kuru *rāṣṭra* proper" are generally equated with the middle region between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā,[1] with their two capitals at Hastināpura[2] and Indraprastha.[3] Kurukṣetra is frequently identified with "the area bounded by the rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī."[4] And Kurujāṅgala is taken to refer to the "wild region[5] of the Kuru realm" or the "waste land of the Kurus"[6] and identified with the region stretching from the Kāmyaka forest on the banks of the Sarasvatī to Khāṇḍava near the Yamunā[7] or with the tract between the Gaṅgā and North Pañcāla[8] or again with the Rohtak-Hansi-Hisar region.[9] These definitions cannot be accepted as quite accurate.[10]

To be sure this confusion, to a considerable extent, arises from literary sources which at times present a description of geographical units which is either vague or fanciful or lends itself to more than one interpretations. The first case can be illustrated by the location of the Kurudeśa as given in the Śakti-saṅgama-tantra, a late work of the 17th century A.D.[11] It describes the Kuru country as extending from the Hastināpura region and lying to the south of Kurukṣetra and east of Pañcāla! Sircar's attempt to inject some sense in this hopelessly confused and misleading description by equating Pañcāla with the region of the Pir Panchal range and the river named after it,[12] is not convincing.

The second case can be illustrated with two interesting examples. Let us first take this familiar verse of the *Mahābhārata*.[13]

दक्षिणेन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दृषद्वतीम् ।
ये वसन्ति कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे ॥

It is always taken to describe Kurukṣetra as the land on the south of the Sarasvatī and the north of the Dṛṣadvatī or in other words just the doab of these two rivers.[14] In reality ancient Kurukṣetra was a much larger geographical entity within which the particularly sacred doab enclosed between the two holy Vedic rivers and described as Brahmāvarta by Manu,[15] would appear to be the subject of comparison with heaven in this verse. In another similar instance the name Kurujāṅgala is often construed to denote "waste land of the Kuru realm"[16] even though Jāṅgala cannot mean "infertile land" here but on the contrary stands for a particular kind of soil which is fertile and rich in production of grains and fruits.

The confusion is further confounded by the use of undoubtedly regional and even local names like Kurujāṅgala, Brahmasara, Rāmahrada, Vinaśana and Samantapañcaka, loosely for the whole of Kurukṣetra.[17] An attempt at clearing this confusion and settling more or less definitive geographical definitions of the three important units of Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala should therefore, be well worth undertaking. Let us therefore examine each name separately in the light of available evidence.

The Kurus

Kuru or "Kuru rāṣṭra" is often equated with the region between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā with its capital at Hastināpura.[18] Raychaudhuri[19] restricts the Kurus proper to the district around Hastināpura Pargiter[20] calls it the middle region between Gaṅgā and Yamunā with capitals at Hastināpura and Khāṇḍavaprastha or Indraprastha. Being unfamiliar with the geography of the area Pargiter did not realise the contradiction involved in the location of a country between Gaṅgā and Yamunā and of its capital outside the doab on the west bank of the Yamunā. V.S. Agrawala[21] notes that Kāśikā,[22] the well-known commentary of Vāmana and Jayāditya on Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, mentions Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala, all the three, as distinct geographical units.

There is no doubt that, to begin with, the name Kuru signified a particular people. Although it does not appear in the *Ṛgveda* specifically in this sense the implication is quite clear from names like Kuruśravaṇa[23] (glory of the Kurus) and Pākasthāman Kaurayāṇa.[24] Kuruśravaṇa was a descendant of the well-known Puru King Trasadasyu.[25] In the later *Saṃhitās* like the *Maitrāyaṇī*[26] and *Kāṇva*[27] Kuru specifically appears as the name of a people. The Tritsu Bharatas and the

Purus, although enemies at one stage, appear to have coalesced with Kurus later.[28] We find the Bharatas in the same territory which was subsequently occupied by the Kurus.[29] The *Ṛgveda*[30] describes two Bharata princes Devaśravas and Devavāta kindling sacrificial fire at the banks of rivers Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī and Āpayā as well as the lake named Mānuṣa. The *Brāhmaṇas*[31] mention Bharata kings subduing Kāśis, raiding the Satvants and making offerings at the Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The Bharatas appear as a variant for the Kuru-Pañcālas in a passage of the *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā*.[32] Also in the list of the great performers of the horse-sacrifice the names of one Kuru and two Bharata princes are mentioned without naming the people over which they ruled, while in other cases that information is specifically given.[33] In later literature the Kurus and Bharatas are clearly regarded as one and the same people. For instance in the *Mahābhārata*, Arjuna is addressed as *Bhārata*[34] as well as *Kurunandana*.[35] The view that the Bharatas held a territory roughly corresponding to Kurukṣetra and bounded on the east by the Yamunā is therefore quite plausible.[36] On the other hand it appears rather extravagant to say that the Kurus were widely scattered even to the north of the Himalayas and about the Sindhu and Asikni.[37]

It is now generally recognised that the *Brāhmanical* culture was developed in the country of the Kuru-Pañcālas and that it spread thence, east, south and west.[38] Most of the important *Brāhmaṇa* texts were undoubtedly composed in this region, described in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* as the middle country, later Madhyadeśa.[40] This text also mentions a section of the Kurus as Uttarakurus who are often placed on the other side of the Himalayas on the basis of the expression "*pareṇa himavantam*,"[41] which is usually mistaken to mean "beyond the Himalayas."[42] This runs contrary to ethnic and geographic considerations. As we have suggested elsewhere[43] "*pareṇa himavantam*" has to be taken to mean "opposite to or, abutting on the Himalayas."

It is particularly relevant for our purpose that the Kurus are frequently coupled with the Pañcālas[44] and once with the Mahāvṛṣas in the *Brāhmaṇas*.[45] There is a direct reference in the *Kāṇvīya* recension of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[45] which describes the Kuru-Pañcālas and Kuru-Mahāvṛṣas as the peculiar home of pure speech. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya[46] has taken the compound Kuru-Mahāvṛṣas to mean the Kurus of the Mahāvṛṣa country but this construction is clearly untenable since both names refer either to territorial units or to people. If we take Kuru in Kuru-Mahāvṛṣas to refer to people the second part of the compound must also be construed likewise and not taken to denote a country. Actually 'Kuru-Mahāvṛṣeṣu' is obviously the locative of the *dvandva* compound formation 'Kuru-Mahāvṛṣāḥ' meaning the Kurus and the Mahāvṛṣas. The standard example of this compound formation sanctioned by Pāṇini[47] is Madra-kekayāḥ meaning the 'Madras and Kekayas.' We come across a host of similar formations in literature from the earliest time and in all these cases territorial continguity is an essential ingredient.

The combinations of Aṅga-Magadhas,[48] Śālva-Matsyas,[49] Kāśi-Kosalas,[50] Śūdra-Ābhīras,[51] Cedi-Matsyas[52] and Kosala-Videhas[53] are a few similar instances of *dvandva* compound based primarily on territorial contiguity. The Pañcālas and the Mahāvṛṣas, therefore, denote two separate people or countries geographically adjoining the Kurus. The Kurus lay in the middle flanked by the Pañcālas on the east and the Mahāvṛṣas on the west.

Pañcāla has been roughly equated with Rohilkhand comprising Bareily, Badaun, Farrukhabad and the adjoining areas including the Central Doab in the U.P., bounded on the east by the Gumti, on the south by the Chambal, and in the north by the foot of the Himalayas.[54] Kannauj was also its capital at the time of the Buddha.[55] Later it was divided into North and South Pañcāla separated by the Gaṅgā; the capital of the former was Ahichhatrā and that of the latter Kāmpilya. North Pañcāla included districts of U.P. lying on the east of the Gaṅgā and north-west of Oudh while South Pañcāla covered the country between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā on the east and south-east of the Kurus and Śūrasenas.[56] Hastināpura, the ancient capital of the Kurus, was situated twenty two miles north-east of Meerut and south-west of Bijnore on the right bank of the Gaṅgā.[57]

The territory of the Mahāvṛṣas lay about Vinaśana and was roughly bounded by the Kurus on the east and extended in the west into Rajasthan areas which were later associated with Niṣādas, Śūdras and Ābhīras.[58] They occupied the country lying in the belt known for its valuable breed of Zebu cattle which gave them their totemic name. This situation agrees with their description as a malarial tract in the *Atharvaveda*.[59] According to a legend in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*[60] sage Raikva was rewarded with the gift of a cluster of villages called after him as Raikvaparṇa by king Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa of the Mahāvṛṣas. These villages still exist in tehsil Nauhar of district Ganganagar and are mainly inhabited by the Raika clan of Rajputs who are evidently the descendants of sage Raikva.[61]

The *Brāhmaṇas* thus place the Kurus between the Pañcālas on the east, roughly having the Gaṅgā as their eastern boundary and the Mahāvṛṣas about Vinaśana as their western neighbours.

The evidence from Buddhist literature also points in the same direction. We learn that after the age of thirty eight years Gautama Buddha undertook extensive missionary activity and travelled from state to state, town to town and village to village propagating the Faith and sojourning at any one place only during the rainy season.[62] Although the central part of the country received more attention from him the ancient land of the Kurus was also not ignored and according to the *Mahāvastu*[63] Buddha personally converted the people of Kuru *janapada*. The *Bhaiṣajyavastu* in the *Vinaya* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*[64] which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C.,[65] describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ānanda. The Buddha went from

Hastināpura through Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmaṇagrāma, and Kālanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhāra as far as Uḍḍiyāna and back. Another town that finds mention in the same work is Bhadrańkara.[66] Buddha's visit to this town is described in the *Divyāvadāna*[67] also where two more journeys to Hastināpura and Srughna find mention. Two more Kuru towns visited by the Buddha, viz. Ṭhullakoṭṭhita and Kammāsadamma have received special importance in Buddhist literature and find repeated mention in several works.[68] A village named Thūṇā, described as Brāhmaṇagrāma and located on the western boundary of Majjhima Deśa[69] and another town described simply as Kauravya[70] were also visited by him.

The Buddha thus visited at least nine towns in the Kurus which were scattered all over the land.[71] Hastināpura lay in tehsil Mawana of Meerut. Mahānagara may refer to Indraprastha. Srughna has been identified with village Sugh near Jagadhari while the Brāhmaṇagrāma named Thūṇā appears to be the same as the present town of Tohana noted as Tauṣāyaṇa by Pāṇini. Kālanagara is Kalanaur, situated 12 miles west of Rohtak, on the road to Bhiwani. The equation of Rohitaka with modern Rohtak is obvious. Bhardrańkara, apparently the same as Bhadrakāra of the Śālva group, is identical with Bhakra after which the prestigious Bhakra dam is named. Ṭhullakoṭṭhita has been equated with the twin village Ṭhol-Kurḍi on the road leading from Ambala City to Thanesar via Jhansa while Kammāsadamma appears to survive in the name Kamoda about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Pehowa.

Buddha is also said to have paid a number of visits to the Uttara Kurus which should literally denote the northern part of the Kurus. The Kuru country was divided into two portions, named Uttara Kuru and Dakṣiṇa Kuru and was eight thousand *yojanas* in extent.[72] The *Jātakas*[73] describe the Kuru kingdom as three hundred leagues in extent while its capital Indapatta was spread over seven leagues. In the *Divyāvadāna*[74] Hastināpura is also mentioned as its capital while the *Mahāvastu*[75] stresses the greatness of the kingdom ruled from this city by attributing to it sixty thousand cities which presents a contrast with the later description of Haryana in the Skanda Purāṇa[76] as a state comprising five lakh villages. In another reference the *Somanassa-jataka*[77] describes Uttara-Pañcāla as a town of the Kuru *rāṣṭra*.

The Buddhist conception of the Kuru country would thus appear to go beyond the description in Brāhmaṇa literature. It comprised the region from beyond Hastināpura in the east to the west of Tohana probably touching Vinaśana identified with Kalibangan in the west, and from the district of Indraprastha in the south to the districts of Srughna in the north-east and Bhakra in the north. At times it also included areas of Uttara-Pañcāla.

A passage in the *Mahābhārata*[72] enumerates the *janapadas* situated around the Kurus. These are Pañcāla, Cedi, Matsya, Śūrasena, Paṭaccara, Daśārṇa,

Navarāṣṭra, Malla, Śālva and Yugandhara. These *janapadas* are described as beautiful and rich in food-grains. The location of Pañcāla has been given above. The Cedis had Kāśī on their east, Avanti in the west, Matsya and Śūrasena in the north-west and the Vindhyas in the south.[79] They can be roughly described as lying to the south of the Yamunā below Vatsa *janapada* i.e. the region of modern Bundelkhanda and adjoining areas.[80] The Matsyas occupied the region of Jaipur including the whole of the present territory of Alwar with a portion of Bharatpur.[81] The Śūrasenas had their capital on the Yamunā at Mathurā which is identified with Maholi, five miles to the south-west of the present town.[82] The Paṭaccaras occupied parts of Allahabad and Banda districts in U.P.[83] The Daśārṇas had their capital at Vidiśā, modern Besnagar on the Betwa or ancient Vetravatī near Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh.[84] This *janapada* was divided into West and East Daśārṇas. The former is equated with eastern Malwa including Bhopal. Eastern Daśārṇa formed a part of the Chattisgarh district in U.P. and included the native state of Patna.[85] Daśārṇa derives its name from river Daśārṇa or the modern Dhasan which rises in Bhopal state among the Vindhyas and joins the Betwa.[86] The Navarāṣṭra is equated with Nausari far away in the Baroach district of Bombay.[87] The territory of the Mallas touched the realm of Uttara-Kosala. It was included in the sixteen *Mahājanapadas* of the Buddhists and consisted of two parts, Mallas of Pāvā called Pāveyaka and those of Kusinārā (modern Kosia 35 miles east of Gorakhpur) called Kosināraka.[88]

The Śālvas were in the mountainous region spread over the trans-Giri part of the present Nahan state and the Kiarda Dun and Jaunsar-Bawar and probably parts of Dehradun extending deep into the Yamunā-Gaṅgā doab[89] and the Yugandharas comprised the tract around the present town of Jagadhari adjoining the Śālvas on the north-east.[90]

This description of the states around the Kurus does not in any way militate against the geographical limits of the Kurus as already established. It needs to be said however, that the Yugandharas and the Śālvas, most of the time, formed a part of the Kuru country.

A word on the location of the Uttara Kurus will not be out of place here. According to the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, when the Buddha went to Uruvelā to initiate three sadhus into the Faith Uruvela Kāśyapa was performing a great sacrifice and wanted him to leave. Out of consideration for him Buddha left for Uttara Kurus where he went around for alms, took bath in the Anotatta lake and then took meals and rested at its bank.[91] Again when a famine befell Verañjā Buddha visited the Uttara Kurus on the request of Sthavira Mahāmoggallāna. Actually the region was visited by many monks and journeys to the Anotatta lake by Sthaviras are recorded right upto the time of Aśoka.[92] The Anotatta lake has been described in the Papañcasūdanī as surrounded by five hills, namely, Sudarśana, Citrakūṭa, Kāla-kūṭa, Gandhamādana and Kailāśa. The Sudassanakūṭa, which was of golden

colour, stood covering it. It has been identified with the celebrated Mānasarovara lake because the flora around it agrees with the Himalayan region.[93] If it was situated in the Uttara Kurus, as it undoubtedly was, the equation of the region with Siberia[94] has to be ruled out. Uttara Kurus have also been described as inhabited by the Yakṣas and ruled by Kubera Vaiśravaṇa whose capital Alakā is traditionally placed near mount Kailāśa and lake Mānasarovara.[95] Without dilating more on the subject it can be observed therefore, that the Uttara Kurus of Buddhist literature probably refer to the region adjoining the Kurus in the north and extending into the high Himalayas. The existence of a sub-division named Kuru (Khat-Kuru) in Jaunsar-Bawar[96] further strengthens this position.

Utpala, the commentator of *Bṛhatsamhitā* takes Kurubhūmi to mean the region around Thanesar.[96a] Alberuni[96b] too, equates Kuru with 'Taneshar' or Thanesar. This Kuru of Utpala and Alberuni is however, just a substitute of Kurukṣetra.

The "*Śakti-saṅgama-tantra*"[97] describes the Kuru country as extending from Hastināpura and lying to the south of Kurukṣetra and east of Pañcāla. This tantra devotes two full paṭalas VIIth VIIIth in its *Sundarī khaṇḍa* to the geographical description of different states. This description is often wrong in many cases and generally unreliable. It is not possible to exclude Hastināpura from the Kuru country whose main capital it was and to place the Kurus to the east of Pañcālas. The location of the Kurus as given in the *Śakti-saṅgama-tantra* cannot therefore be taken seriously.

The geographical picture of the Kuru country that emerges from the evidence noted above is that of an extensive land. With Bhadraṅkara or Bhadrakāra as its part it touched the Sutlej in the north which means that considerable areas on the north-west of the Sarasvatī were included in it. On the north-east its limits reached into the high Himalayas to cover most of Jaunsar-Bawar and the Śālva country. In the east even the region of Uttara-Pañcāla formed its part at one time and, Hastināpura being its main capital, its boundary must have extended considerably beyond this town. In the south it included the district of Indraprastha or present Delhi which was its second capital. The adjoining state on this side was Śūrasena which had Mathurā as its capital. In the south-west it was adjoined by the Matsyas while in the west it had the Mahāvṛṣas about the region of Vinaśana or Kalibangan as its neighbours. In the north-west the Sutlej apparently formed the boundary.

Kuruksetra

We come across Kurukṣetra as the name of a region from the *Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā*[98] onward. It was already regarded as a holy land and is repeatedly mentioned as the venue of sacrifices by gods and *ṛṣis*.[99] Earlier the *Ṛgveda*[100] also

refers to Bharata princes kindling sacrificial fire on the sacred rivers Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī and Āpayā as well as the lake Mānuṣa.

A precise geographical definition of the land is however given in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*[101] while describing a sacrifice performed by gods with Kurukṣetra as their altar. The Khāṇḍava i.e. the region about Khāṇḍavaprastha or Indraprastha (the old site of Indarpat in Delhi) made up the southern half of this altar, Tūrghna its northern half, Pariṇat the lower or western half and the Marus or the Marwar desert its rubbish pit.

The identification of Pariṇat with Parinos of Arrian, a tributory of the Indus[102] does not appear to be plausible. The place or more correctly the region, should be equated with parts of the Sirsa-Hisar-Hanumangarh tract to satisfy its description as the lower half of Kurukṣetra if the upper half is placed in Tūrghna which is a scribal error for Srughna. From the description of Sārasvata and Dārṣadvata sacrificial sessions in the *Brāhmaṇas*[103] and *Śrautasūtras*[104] Pariṇat appears to be the lower part of the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab.[105]

The identification of Srughna with the site of Sugh, which was the central town of the region, admits of no doubt.[106] Srughna enjoyed considerable importance in ancient times. The old mound of Sugh lies 30° 9'N and 77° 23'E, on the Western Jumna Canal[107] running in the old bed of the Dṛṣadvatī,[108] about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhari. Yugandhara of Sanskrit literature. By the time of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* the town had acquired enough prestige to lend its name to the surrounding region and thereafter till about the 12th century A.D. it always remained in the lime light.[109] One reason probably was its location on an important east-west trade route. The road from Mathurā to this town has been called Sraughna by Pāṇini.[110] It is also mentioned in Buddhist works like *Mahāmāyūrī* and *Divyāvadāna*[112] and in the *Bṛhatsamhitā* and described in some detail by Hieun-Tsang[113] who visited it in the 7th century A.D. and found an Aśokan stūpa and a monastery to the south-west of the city, apart from many other stūpas.

The site has been excavated on a modest scale and it has yielded Painted Grey Ware sherds of inferior quality associated with Northern Black Polished Ware and Fine Grey Ware datable to circa 600-500 B.C.[114] Cunningham has highlighted its importance while pointing out that it stood on the high road leading from the Gangetic doab via Meerut, Saharanpur and Ambala to the upper Panjab and fell on the route taken by Mahmud of Gazni on the way back from his Kannauj expedition, by Timur while returning from his plundering campaign at Haridwar and by Babar for his advance to the conquest of Delhi.

According to Hieun-Tsang the kingdom of Srughna was six thousand li or one thousand miles in circuit, on the east it extended to the Gaṅgā and on the north to a range of lofty mountains, while the Yamunā flowed through the midst

of it. From these data Cunningham[115] concludes that Srughna must have comprised the states of Sirmore and Garhwal, lying between the Giri river and the Gaṅgā, with portions of the districts of Ambala and Saharanpur in the plains. This estimate of Srughna would appear to tally with our definition of the Uttara Kurus as given above. The description of Srughna as the northern half of Kurukṣetra thus implies that Uttara Kurus constituted the northern half of Kurukṣetra too.

Khāṇḍava is first mentioned in the *Brāhmaṇas* as a venue of long sacrificial sessions. The *Jaiminīya*[116] and the *Śāṭyāyana*[117] *Brāhmaṇas* mention the performance of a satra here by the *Gaupāyanas*. The *Pañcaviṁśa*[118] *Brāhmaṇa* describes it as the scene of an year-long sacrificial session by the sages, Dhṛti and Vātavat. According to the popular story given in the *Mahābhārata*[119] Agni, the god of fire, appeased its hunger by burning this forest with the help of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the face of Indra's opposition. The town of Khāṇḍavaprastha was built by the Pāṇḍavas as the capital of their own part of the Kuru kingdom and it came to be known as Indraprastha later. According to another story in the Kālikā Purāṇa[120] this forest was originally the abode of Indra. It was cut down by King Sudarśana of the Candra dynasty who built a town called Khāṇḍavanagarī in it. It was however wrested from him by Vijaya the king of Kāśi who again turned it into a forest under the direction of Indra. The town built by Sudarśana has been described as hundred *yojanas* in length and thirty *yojanas* in breadth.

It would thus appear that the name Khāṇḍava of the southern half of Kurukṣetra applied to an extensive region with Delhi, the site of the ancient town of Khāṇḍavaprastha or Indraprastha, as its focal point.[121] The account of the Kālikā Purāna describes it as not far from *Himavat* which might have prompted Nando Lal Dey[122] to define it as a greater portion of the Meerut division of U.P., from Bulandsahar to Saharanpur, generally identical with Muzaffarnagar. It must be remembered, however, that the central point of this region was Indraprastha and, in view of the fact that it was an extensive region covered with forests, it must have denoted a fairly extensive territory reaching close to Mathurā in the south.

Sanskrit inscriptions of the 13th to 16th centuries invariably refer to Jodhpur-Udaipur-Bikaner region as the desert i.e. Maru, Maru *deśa* or Marusthalī.[123] The Sarasvatī is said to have dried up about the head or top of the Marus.[124] The spot can be said to be identical with Vinaśana where the Sarasvatī lost itself in the desert out of its contempt for the Śūdra-Ābhīras[125] and Niṣādas.[126] Vinaśana has been equated with Kalibangan where, even now, the flow of Ghaggar-Sarasvatī dries up in the sands unless on account of excessive decrease or increase in rainfall it ends short of Kalibangan or a little below it. Existence of many sacrificial altars facing the Ghaggar-Sarasvatī at this pre-Harappan/Harappan site appears to suggest that the Sārasvata and Dārṣadvata *satras*, for which the *yajamānas* took *dīkṣā* at Vinaśana, were started from the site of Kalibangan

upstream along the two rivers.[127] This spot eminently qualifies for being described as Maruprṣṭha or the top of the desert.

An examination of the geographical boundaries of Kurukṣetra thus appears to make it co-terminus with the Kurus till at least the later Vedic period. This is quite understandable because just as the name Kuru of the people applied to their land also Kurukṣetra too originally meant the land of the Kurus. In late medieval Jain works it has been called a *rāṣṭra*. Gradually however the geographical definition of Kurukṣetra began to shrink on account of several factors.[127a]

Firstly the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab acquired more religious importance as reflected in its description by Manu as Brahmāvarta.[128] The place of Brahmāvarta was taken by Kurukṣetra with the inevitable consequence of curtailment in its area. Secondly the name got associated with the illustrious king Kuru as the *Kṣetra* or field first ploughed by him.[129] A field naturally had to be a restricted area and not a whole region. Thirdly the concept of Yakṣa-dvārapālas came to be applied to Kurukṣetra also.[130] While on the one hand it was equated with the *Uttara-vedī*[131] of Brahmā and called Brahmāvarta on the other hand the Yakṣas named Tarantuka, Arantuka, Macakruka and Kapila were placed at its four[132] corners which, even if not clearly identified, restricted it virtually to a tract between the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī. Plakṣāvatarana[133] to the north of Jagadhari, Vṛddhakanyāka tīrtha[134] in the upper reaches of the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar somewhere below Plakṣaprāsravaṇa or Lavāsā in Pacchād[135] and Muñjavaṭa near Jind[136] acquired the position of gates to the land of Kurukṣetra. In the third stage the name Kurukṣetra got confined literally to the tīrtha complex of the present town of Thanesar which appropriated the adjective of Dharmakṣetra also. In the confusion it was described as Brahmavedī, the tract of the five lakes of Paraśurāma, Samantapañcaka and even as Brahmasara and Sannihatī.[137] On account of the convergence of pilgrims from all parts of the country to the Sannihatī lake for a dip at the time of a solar eclipse[138] the main railway station of the city was also christened as Kurukṣetra. So much so that people from the neighbouring rural areas started calling even the Brahmasara lake by the name of Kurukṣetra tank."

Kurujangala

As already noted Kurujāṅgala is often misunderstood as the 'waste land' or the 'wild region' (*jāṅgala*) of the Kuru realm.[139] The *Mahābhārata*[140] however describes it as a *rāṣṭra* and traces the origin of the name to king Kuru.[141] It has thus been used as another name for the Kurus and Kurukṣetra also.[142] There are however some passages which give a fairly clear indication of the tract to which the name Kurujāṅgala applied. In Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*,[143] for instance, the messengers, directed to fetch Bharata from Rājagṛha in Kekaya, on the sudden death of

Daśaratha, start from Ayodhyā and on their westward journey cross the Gaṅgā, pass through the Pañcāla country and then proceeded through Kurujāṅgala. In agreement with this description of Vālmiki Hema Candra[144] describes Kurujāṅgala as the country lying to the north-west of Hastināpura.

The *Mahābhārata* also appears to support this position. During his self-imposed *vānaprastha* in the company of his queens Kunti and Mādrī, king Pāṇḍu visits the Caitraratha forest, Gandhamādana peak and the Śataśṛṅga mountain.[145] Caitraratha has been identified with modern Chakrata or Jaunsar-Bawar forest division comprising the northern part of district Dehradun of U.P.[146] Gandhamādana finds mention in the Viṣṇu *Purāṇa* as the hill on which Badarikāśrama was situated.[147] This Badarikāśrama most probably refers to Ādyabadarī on river Somb (old Vedic Aśmanvatī) to the north of Kapālamocana tīrtha near Bilaspur on the Ambala-Jagadhari road in Haryana. The description in the Great Epic is rather loose but from the context the name Śataśṛṅga appears to refer to the Shiwalik range above Ādyabadarī. From this region Kunti proceeds towards Hastināpura covering the long distance through Kurujāṅgala,[148] having the tract of Jagadhari-Saharanpur as its central portion. This was the north-eastern strip of the Kuru country which is known for its fertility and richness in the production of grains and fruits. It cannot be described as "waste land."

The word '*jāṅgala*' in the name Kurujāṅgala cannot be construed to mean "the wild region of the Kuru realm." In reality it denotes a particular kind of soil which according to its traditional definition, makes for a picturesque and prosperous land of wind and sunshine, abounding in delicious fruits and food-grains.[149] It is this kind of rich *jāṅgala* country that Manu[150] recommends for residence. The name Kurujāṅgala therefore applied to the north eastern part of Kuru country notwithstanding its occasional use in place of Kuru and Kurukṣetra.

We can now sum up the result of our inquiry as follows: Of the three geographical names Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala the first two were almost coterminus with the exception that for sometime the Kuru kingdom embraced a slightly larger area, while Kurukṣetra gradually shrank in extent till it came to denote first the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab and more recently only the Thanesar tīrtha complex.

In the Vedic age the names Kuru and Kurukṣetra applied to a region larger than the present state of Haryana, extending virtually upto the Sutlej in the north-west and reaching beyond Gaṅgā in the east. Kurujāṅgala, on the other hand, was the north-eastern part of Kurukṣetra having the Jagadhari-Saharanpur tract as its central portion.

Notes and References

1. V.S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini* (I.P.), 2nd ed. Varanasi 1963, p. 56; F.E. Pargiter, *The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Eng. Tr. and Notes* (M.P.), Calcutta 1954, p. 354, And
 H.C. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India* (P.H.A.I.), 7th ed. Calcutta 1972, p. 20.
2. I.P. p. 56.
3. M.P. p. 354.
4. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India* (G.A.M.I.), Delhi 1971, p. 99.
 Ancient Geography of India (A.G.I.), Ed. S.N. Majumdar, Calcutta 1924, pp. 380 and 701.
 V.N. Datta and H.A. Phadke, *History of Kurukṣetra*, Kurukshetra 1984, p. 4. Their assertion that "The area bounded by the rivers Sarasvati and Dṛṣadvati, where the Kurus lived was called Kurukṣetra in the *Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas*" is untenable. They do not give any reference to support it.
5. P.H.A.I., p. 20.
6. M.P., p. 354.
7. P.H.A.I., p. 20.
8. M.P., p. 354.
9. I.P. p. 56.
10. Cf. M.R. Singh, *Geographical Data in the Early Purāṇas* (Singh), Calcutta 1976, p. 67.
11. G.A.M.I., p. 76.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
13. *Vana*, 81. 175.
14. G.A.M.I., p. 99; V.S. Agrawala, *Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study*, Varanasi 1964, p. 47; H.H. Wilson, *The Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Calcutta 1972, p. 147; Ajay Mitra Shastri, *India as seen in the Bṛhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira* (Shastri), Delhi 1969, p. 85.
15. *Manusmṛti*, ii. 17:

 सरस्वतीदृषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् ।
 तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्त्तं प्रचक्षते ॥

16. B.C. Law, *Historical Geography of Ancient India* (H.G.A.I.), Ist Indian ed., Delhi 1984, p. 100; M.P., p. 354.
17. *Trikāṇḍaśeṣa*, ii. 1.14: कुरुक्षेत्रं विनशनं . . .

 and *Vīramitrodaya*, Ed. Viṣṇu Prasāda Sharma, Benares 1917, *Tīrthaprakāśa*, p. 462:

आद्यं ब्रह्मसरः पुण्यं ततो रामह्रदः स्मृतः ।
कुरुणा कृषिणा कृष्टं कुरुक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम् ॥

The commentator explains:

. . . . संज्ञाभेदमात्रमेतत् । प्रथमं ब्रह्मसरः संज्ञा ततो रामह्रद संज्ञा ततः कुरुक्षेत्र-संज्ञेति । एवं ब्रह्मसर इति तस्यैव संज्ञान्तरम् । रामह्रद इति च त्रेतायाम् । रामह्रदः स्मृतः इत्युक्तेः । एवमुत्तरवेदि संज्ञा विनशन संज्ञा प्रयाग संज्ञा सन्निहतसंज्ञा सन्निहत्यादि संज्ञाप्यस्यैव । विनशन पदेन यद्यपि यत्र नष्टा सरस्वती स देश उच्यते । तथाऽपि सम्पूर्णे कुरुक्षेत्रेऽपि तत्प्रयोगादपि तथा । एवं च रामह्रदादि शब्दानां कुरुक्षेत्रैकदेशे रूढानां समस्त कुरुक्षेत्रे रूढि निरूढ लक्षणा वेत्यन्यदेतत् । एवं कुरुजांगल शब्दस्याप्येकदेशे रूढस्य तथात्वम् । . . .

18. M.P., p. 354; I.P. p. 56; H.G.A.I., p. 100.
19. P.H.A.I., p. 21.
20. M.P., p. 354.
21. I.P., p. 56.
22. कुरवश्च कुरुक्षेत्रं च कुरुकुरुक्षेत्रं, कुरवश्च कुरुजांगलं च कुरुकुरुजांगलम् ।
 Cf. *Mbh. Ādi.*, 100. 1088 fn. under v. 30:

 तेषु त्रिषु कुमारेषु जातेषु कुरुजांगलम् ।
 कुरवोऽथ कुरुक्षेत्रं सर्वं त्रयमवर्धत ॥

23. X. 33.4.
24. VIII. 3.21.
25. A.A. Macdonell and A.B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (V.I.), Two volumes, 3rd Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. i, pp. 167 and 170.
26. IV. 2.6.
27. XI. 3.3. and 6.3.
28. V. I, i. 167; Also Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*, (Buddha), Reprint, Delhi 1971, pp. 403 and 404.
29. V. 1, i. 167.
30. III. 23.4.
31. V.I., i. 168.
32. XI. 3.3.
33. V.I. i. 168.
34. *Bhīṣma*, 24.14.
35. *Ibid.*, 24.41; Other modes of address like *Kaurava*, *Kauravaśreṣṭha*, *Kauravya*, *Kauraveya*, *Bharatarṣabha*, *Bharataśreṣṭha* and *Bharatasattama* are also used in the *Mbh.*
36. V.I. i. 169 N. 44.
37. *Ibid.*

38. V.I. i. 168.
39. V.I. i. 165.
40. VIII. 14:

 ···अस्यां ध्रुवायां मध्यमायां प्रतिष्ठायां दिशि ये के च कुरुपञ्चालानां राजानः सवशोशीनराणां राज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते ।

 Oldenberg (Buddha, p. 392 n) points out that in treating of the other territories, instead of '*asyām*' the word '*etasyām*' is used: '*asyām*' contains a significant hint that the compiler of the text belongs to this very territory.

41. VIII. 14:

 ···तस्मादेतस्यामुदीच्यां दिशि ये के च परेण हिमवन्तं जनपदा उत्तर कुरव उत्तरमद्रा इति वैराज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते ।

42. V. I. i. 168; Shastri, p. 86.
43. *Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India* (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 159 f.
44. V.I. i. 165.
45. Ed. Caland and Raghu Vira, Reprint, Delhi 1983, IV. 2.3.10:

 उदीचीं पथ्यया स्वस्त्या वाग्वै पथ्या स्वस्तिः तस्मादत्रौत्तरा है वाग्वदतीत्याहुः कुरुपञ्चालेषु कुरुमहावृषेष्वित्येतां हि तया दिशं प्राजानन्नेषा हि तस्या दिक् प्रज्ञाता ।

46. *Racial Affinities of Early North Indian Tribes* (N.I.T.), Delhi 1973, p. 51.
47. II. 4.7.
48. *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (G.B.), I.2.10.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Mbh. Śalya*, 36.1.
52. *Mbh. Virāṭa*, 1.11.
53. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Ś.B.), i. 4.1.17.
54. Nandolal Dey, *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieaval India* (Dey), 3rd ed. Delhi 1971, p. 145.
55. T.W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, Ist Indian ed. Calcutta 1950, p. 20.
56. H.G.A.I., p. 115.
57. Dey, p. 74.
58. Studies, p. 242.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 204 ff.
60. Ch. IV, Sec. 2.
61. Studies, p. 215.
62. B.S. Upādhyāya, *Buddhakālīna Bhāratīya Bhūgola* (B.B.B.), Prayāga, V.S. 2018, p. 90 ff.
63. Calcutta ed. Vol. II, p. 564; Also L.M. Joshi and Fauja Singh, *History of the Punjab*, Vol. I, Patiala 1976, p. 193.

64. Gilgit Mss. Vol. III, pt. I, ed. Nalinaksh Dutt, Srinagar 1947, and *Mūlasarvāstivādavinayavastu*, Vol. I, Ed. S. Bagchi (B.S.T. No. 16), Darbhanga 1967.
65. M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Calcutta 1933, Vol. II, p. 232; According to G.S.P. Misra (*Age of the Vinaya*, Delhi 1972, p. 7) its Chinese and Tibetan translations do not go beyond the 5th century A.D.
66. Darbhanga ed. p. 145 ff.
67. Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, p. 77 ff.
68. Studies, p. 149 ff., and B.B.B., pp. 406-410.
69. E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature*, Roma 1956, pp. 31-32, Rati Lal N. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India* (Mehta), Reprint, Delhi 1985, p. 399.
70. Studies, p. 152; *Avadānaśataka*, Ed. J.S. Speyer, The Hague 1958, p. 67.
71. For identification of these towns and Buddha's visits to the Kurus, see Studies, p. 149 ff.
72. Dipak Kumar Barua, *Analytical Study of the Four Nikāyas*, Calcutta 1971, p. 334.
73. V. Fausboll, *The Jātaka*, 7 volumes (Jātaka), London 1964, Vol. V., p. 57, *Sambhavajātaka* (no. 515).
74. P. 283; Also Cf. B.C. Law, *Geographical Essays*, Vol. I, London 1937, p. 28.
75. Bhikkhu Telwatte Rahula, *A Critical Study of the Mahāvastu*, Delhi 1978, p. 301.
76. *Kumārikā Khaṇḍa*, 39.135 (ii):

 हरीयाले च ग्रामाणां लक्षपञ्चक सम्मितम्

77. *Jātaka*, IV, p. 444, lines 10-11:

 अतीते कुरुरट्ठे उत्तरपञ्चालनगरे रेणु नाम राजा राज्यं कारेसि . . .

78. *Virāṭa*, 1.9:

 सन्ति रम्या जनपदाः बह्वन्नाः परितः कुरून्
 पञ्चालाश्चेदिमत्स्याश्च शूरसेनाः पटच्चराः।
 दशार्णा नवराष्ट्रं च मल्लाः शाल्वाः युगन्धराः ॥

79. B.B.B., p. 427 and n. 1.
80. H.G.A.I., p. 49.
81. Dey, p. 128.
82. Dey, p. 82; H.G.A.I., p. 51.
83. G.A.M.I., p. 31.
84. G.A.M.I., p. 205.
85. Dey, p. 54.
86. Singh, p. 340 f.
87. Dey, p. 139.
88. Singh, p. 238 f.

89. O.P. Bharadwaj, *The Shiwaliks or the Śālvakāgiri and the Śālvāvayavas*, paper presented at the A.I.O.C. Kurukṣetra session 1975.
90. The Yugandharas belonged to the Śālva group of tribes and at one time shared their King Yaugandhari with the Śālvas: *Āpastambīya Mantrapāṭha*, II. 11.12:

 यौगन्धरिरेव नो राजेति साल्वीरवादिषु ।
 विवृत्तचक्रा आसीनास्तीरेण यमुने तव ॥

91. B.B.B., pp. 68 and 88.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
93. H.G.A.I., p. 143.
94. H.C. Raychaudhury, *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, Calcutta 1958, pp. 71 ff; also Mehta, p. 364.
95. V.K. Mathur, *Aitihāsika Sthānāvalī* (Mathur), Delhi 1969, p. 41.
96. Edwin T. Atkinson, *The Himalayan Gazetteer*, 3 vols. 2 pts. each, Delhi 1973; Vol. II, pt. 2, p. 836.

96a. Shastri, p. 85.

96b. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, Reprint, Delhi, p. i.300.

97. Ramādatta Śukla, Prayāga, *Sundari Khaṇḍa*, 7. 62:

 हस्तिनापुरमारभ्य कुरुक्षेत्राच्च दक्षिणे ।
 पाञ्चालात् पूर्वभागे तु कुरुदेशः प्रकीर्तितः ॥

 The verse is quoted in G.A.M.I., p. 79 as follows:

 हस्तिनापुरमारभ्य कुरुक्षेत्रस्य दक्षिणे ।
 पञ्चालपूर्वभागस्तु कुरुदेशः प्रकीर्तितः ॥

 In this form the whole of Pañcāla is described as the eastern part of the Kurus.

98. II. 1.4:

 देवा वै सत्रमासत कुरुक्षेत्रे अग्निः सोमा इन्द्रस्तेऽब्रुवन्, यतमं न प्रथमं यश ऋच्छात्तं नः सहेति . . . ।

99. In addition to M.S., II. 1.4; M.S., IV. 5.9; Ś.B., IV. 1.1.2; IV. 1.5.13; *Jaiminīya Br.* (J.B.), II. 300; III. 126; *Pañcaviṁśa Br.* (P.B.), 25.13.3 etc. etc.
100. III. 23.4:

 नित्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम् ।
 दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि ॥

101. VIII. 1.1:

 · · · · तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत्, तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्धं आसीत्, तूघ्नमुत्तरार्धः, परिणज्जघनार्धः, मरव उत्करः · · · · ।

102. H.G.A.I., p. 101.
103. See e.g. P.B., 25-10. 1-23; and J.B., II. 297-298.
104. *Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, XIII. 29; *Kātyāyana Ś.S.*, XXIV. 7.22; *Lāṭyāyana Ś.S.*, X. 17.12-14; *Āśvalāyana Ś.S.*, XII. 6. etc. For extracts see Studies, pp. 9 f and 15.
105. Studies, p. 23.
106. A.G.I., p. 395 f.
107. For a brief note see *Journal of Haryana Studies* (J.H.S.), Jan. 1971, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 8-15.
108. See O.P. Bharadwaj, *The Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī* (Paper presented at the XXXII ICANAS, Hamburg 1986); *Studies in Indology* (Prof. R.V. Joshi Fel. Vol.), New Delhi 1988-89, pp. 141-156.
109. Studies, p. 196.
110. I.P., p. 431.
111. II. 23.60.
112. Darbhanga ed. p. 47.
113. Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India*, 2nd Indian ed., Delhi 1973.
114. For a report on the excavations at Sugh, See Suraj Bhan, *J.H.S.* Vol. IX, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 1-49.
115. A.G I., p. 398.
116. III. 168.
117. 65.19.
118. XXV. 3.6.
119. *Ādi*, Chs. 214-225.
120. Ch. 78 quoted in *Vacaspatyam*, Vol. III, p. 2473:

सोमवंशेऽभवद्राजा महात्मा स महाबलः ।
वीरः सुदर्शनो नाम चारुरूपः प्रतापवान् ॥
स वै हिमवतो नातिदूरे भङ्क्त्वा महावनम् ।
सिंहान् व्याघ्रान् समुत्सार्य क्वचिच्चापि तपोधनान् ॥
खाण्डवीं नाम नगरीमकरोत्तत्र शोभनाम् ।
त्रिंशद्योजनविस्तीर्णामायतां शतयोजनम् ॥

121. *The Sarval Inscr.* of V.S. 1384 (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, 1892, p. 93 ff.) describes Delhi, Spelled Dhilli, as a town built by the Tomaras in Haryana which is like a heaven on earth:

देशोऽस्ति हरियानाख्यः पृथिव्यां स्वर्ग सन्निभः ।
ढिल्लिकाख्या पुरी यत्र तोमरैरस्तिनिर्मिता ॥

122. P. 99.

123. A Ghosh, *The Rajputana Desert—its Archaeological Aspect.*, Reproduced as App. I in Aural Stein, *An Archaeological Tour Along the Ghaggar-Hakra River*, Meerut 1989, pp. 98-106, p. 98.

124. *Vana*, 80.118:

ततो विनशनं गच्छेन्नियतो नियताशनः।।
गच्छत्यन्तर्हिता यत्र मरुपृष्ठे सरस्वती ।।

125. *Śalya*, 36.1:

ततो विनशनं राजन्नाजगाम हलायुधः।
शूद्राभीरान् प्रति द्वेषाद्यत्र नष्टा सरस्वती ।।

126. *Mbh. Vana*, 130. 3-4:

एषा सरस्वती रम्या दिव्या चौघवती नदी।
एतद् विनशनं नाम सरस्वत्या विशाम्पते ।।
द्वारं निषादराष्ट्रस्य येषां द्वेषात् सरस्वतो।
प्रविष्टा पृथिवीं वीर मा निषादा हि मां विदुः ।।

127. Studies, p. 20 ff.

127a. *Tīrtha Kalpa*, Jinaprabhasūri, Ed. D.R. Bhandarkar, Calcutta 1942, p. 312:

शतपुत्र्यामभून्नाभिसूनोः सूनुः कुरुर्नृपः।
कुरुक्षेत्रमितिख्यातं राष्ट्रमेतत्तदाख्यया ।।

128. See supra N. 14.

129. *Vāmana Purāṇa*, Cr. ed., 23.21-33; Sm., 1.13 and 11.24.

130. *Mbh. Vana*, 83.9. 15, 52 and 208.
Also see O.P. Bharadwaj: *Yakṣa-Worship in Kurukṣetra*, ABORI, Vol. LXX (1989) Pune 1989, pp. 199-219.

131. *Vāmana P.*, Sm. 1. 14.

132. *Mbh. Śalya*, 52.20:

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरं रामह्रदानां च मचक्रुकस्य च।
एतत् कुरुक्षेत्र समन्तपञ्चकं प्रजापतेरुत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ।।

Also 52.1.

133. *Mbh. Vana*, 129. 11 and 13:

अद्य चात्र निवत्स्यामः क्षपां भरतसत्तम।
द्वारमेतत्तु कौन्तेय कुरुक्षेत्रस्य भारत ।।

As a corollery it was also the door for heaven to the north of Kurukṣetra:

एतत्प्लक्षावतरणं यमुनातीर्थमुत्तमम्।
एतद्वै नाकपृष्ठस्य द्वारमाहुर्मनीषिणः ।।

134. *Mbh. Śalya*, 51.25:

समन्तपञ्चकद्वारात् ततो निष्क्रम्य माधवः ॥
पप्रच्छर्षिगणान् रामः कुरुक्षेत्रस्य यत्फलम् ॥

Vṛddha Kanyāka is a Sārasvata Tīrtha vide Devala Quoted in *Kṛtyakalpataru of Bhaṭṭa Lakṣmīdhara*, Ed. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, G.O.S. Baroda 1942, p. 250:

प्लक्षप्रास्रवणं वृद्धकन्याकं सारस्वतमादित्यतीर्थं कौबेरं वैजयन्तं पृथूदकं नैमिषं विनशनं वंशोद्भेदं प्रभासमिति सारस्वतानि ।

135. Studies, pp. 8-19.

136. *Vāmana P., Sm.*, 13.38 and 41:

ततो मुञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः ।
उपोष्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्नुयात् ॥
कुरुक्षेत्रस्य तद्द्वारं विश्रुतं पुण्यवर्धनम् ।
प्रदक्षिणमुपावर्त्य ब्राह्मणान्भोजयेत्ततः ॥

Vinaśana was the gate towards *Niṣādarāṣṭra*. See N. 126 supra.

137. See n. 16 supra.

138. The name Sannihatī or Sannihatyā has been derived from the convergence of *Tīrthas* into this lake every month. A bath in this *tīrtha* on *Amāvasyā* and solar eclipse is particularly sanctifying and performance of *śrāddha* on this occasion brings one the merit accruing from the performance of a thousand *Aśvamedha* sacrifices.

Mbh. Cr. Ed., *Vana*, 81. 166-169.
Mbh. G.P. ed., *Vana*, 83. 195-197 (i):

मासि मासि नरव्याघ्र सन्निहत्यां न संशयः ।
तीर्थसंनिहनादेव संनिहत्येति विश्रुता ॥
अमावस्यां तु तत्रैव राहुग्रस्ते दिवाकरे ॥
यः श्राद्धं कुरुते मर्त्यः तस्य पुण्यफलं शृणु ।
अश्वमेधसहस्रस्य सम्यगिष्टस्य यत्फलम् ॥

and *Vāmana P., Sm.*, 13.50 and 20.9.
Also see *Kalyāṇa*, Jan. 1957, No. 1. p. 79.

139. See supra... Even lexicons have erred on this point. See e.g. *Vācaspatyam*, Vol. III, p. 2124:

जङ्गलमेव जांगलम्, कुरुषु जांगलम् ।

140. *Ādi*, 191.9:

कुरुजांगलमुख्येषु राष्ट्रेषु नगरेषु च ।
अनुत्वमभिषिच्यस्व नृपतिं धर्मवत्सलम् ॥

and 102.22:

वीरसूनां काशिसुते देशानां कुरुजांगलम् ।
सर्वधर्मविदां भीष्मः पुराणां गजसाह्वयम् ॥

141. *Ādi*, 89.42-43:

ततः संवरणाद्देवी तपती सुषुवे कुरुम् ।
राजन्नेतं प्रजाः सर्वा धर्मज्ञ इति मेनिरे ॥
तस्य नाम्नाऽभिविख्यातं पृथिव्यां कुरुजांगलम् ।
कुरुक्षेत्रं च तपसा पुण्यं चक्रे महातपाः ॥

142. e.g. *Vāmana P., Sm.*, 1.1:

सरस्वतीदृषद्वत्योरन्तरे कुरुजांगले · · · · · ।

and
Dey, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

143. *Ayodhyā*, 68.13:

ते हास्तिनपुरे गंगां तीर्त्वा प्रत्यङ्मुखा ययुः ।
पञ्चालदेशमासाद्य मध्येन कुरुजांगलम् ॥

144. Quoted in *Vācaspatyam*, Vol. VI., p. 5154:

हस्तिनापुरस्य उत्तर पश्चिमे कुरुजांगलाख्ये देशे च . . .

145. *Ādi*, 110.42-45:

राजपुत्रस्तु कौरव्यः पाण्डुर्मूलफलाशनः ।
जगाम सह भार्याभ्यां ततो नागसभं गिरिम् ॥
स चैत्ररथ मासाद्य वारिषेणमतीत्य च ।
हिमवन्तमतिक्रम्य प्रययौ गन्धमादनम् ॥
रक्ष्यमाणो महाभूतैः सिद्धैश्च परमर्षिभिः ।
उवास स तदा राजा समेषु विषमेषु च ॥
इन्द्रद्युम्नसरः प्राप्य हंसकूटमतीत्य च ।
शतशृङ्गे महाराज तापसः समपद्यत ।

146. Studies, p. 79 f.

147. V. 37.34:

यद्वदर्याश्रमं पुण्यं गन्धमादनपर्वते ।
नरनारायणस्थाने तत्पवित्रं महोतले ॥

148. *Ādi*, 117.6 (iii) and 8:

आदाय प्रस्थिता: सर्वे शतशृंगान्नगोत्तमात् ॥
सुखिनी सा पुरा भूत्वा सततं पुत्रवत्सला ।
प्रपन्ना दीर्घमध्वानं संक्षिप्तं तदमन्यत ॥

149. *Bhāvaprakāśa* with com. of Lalchand Vaidya, 2 vols., Reprint, Delhi 1986, *Pūrvārdha*, Vol. 1, p. 62, IV, 5-6:

आकाशशुभ्र उच्चश्च स्वल्पपानीयपादप: ।
शमी-करीर-बिल्वार्क-पीलुकर्कन्धुसंकुल: ॥
हरिणैणर्क्ष पृषत गोकर्णखरसंकुल: ।
सुस्वादुफलवान् देशो वातलो जांगल: स्मृत: ॥

150. *Manusmṛti*, VII. 69:

जाङ्गलं सस्यसम्पन्नम् आर्यप्रायमनाविलम् ।
रम्यमानतसामन्तं स्वाजीव्यं देशमावसेत् ॥

Com. Kullūka explains *jāṅgala* in the following verse without giving its source:

अल्पोदकतृणो यस्तु प्रवात: प्रचुरातप: ।
स ज्ञेयो जांगलो देशो बहुधान्यादि संयुत: ॥

2

THE VEDIC SARASVATĪ

Sarasvatī can be called the holiest of the holy rivers of India in as much as it has retained its sacred character right from the Ṛgvedic age to the present day. Many other streams were christened after it by the people moving to other parts of the country from the region of Kurukṣetra which was the cradle of Indian civilization. Even the Gaṅgā was invested with more and more of her qualities with the passage of time.[1] Gradually it came to signify all the holy rivers as a verse of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa[2] suggests. According to the Mahābhārata[3] the seven Sarasvatīs cover the universe and the Sarasvatī made her appearance whithersoever she was summoned. At Puṣkara she appeared under the name of Suprabhā, at Naimiṣa as Kāñcanākṣī, at Gayā as Viśālā, in northern Kosala as Manoramā, at Kurukṣetra as Oghavatī and at Gaṅgādvāra as Sureṇu and on the Himavat, Vimalodā. All these seven forms then came and mingled together in the Saptasārasvata tīrtha in Kurukṣetra. However the important rivers which bear the name Sarasvatī are the Harkhaiti or Harahvaiti also called the Arghandab or Helmand in Kandahar (Arachocia),[4] the Arbuda-Sarasvatī in Gujarat[5] and the Thanesar-Sarasvatī near the city of Thanesar now also known as Kurukṣetra.

Scholars who believe in the extra Indian origin of the Aryans think that the name Harkhaiti or Harahvaiti travelled with them to India with the linguistic change of "Ha" to "Sa" while those believing in their autochthonus origin contend that the name Sarasvatī was carried westward by the outgoing Indo-Aryans and the linguistic process involved was of the change of "Sa" to "Ha." If we are not

pre-disposed in favour of the foreign origin of the Indian Aryans[6] the second alternative would appear more logical. Whereas it may not be possible to establish the philological process of the change of "Ha" to "Sa" and to explain particularly its change to all the sibilants "Śa", "Ṣa" and "Sa", it is quite easy to prove the reverse of it. From the earliest times through the ages we come across instances of this change of "Śa", "Ṣa" and "Sa" to "Ha" specially as we proceed from the traditional region of Madhyadeśa towards the west. To take only a couple of instances even now Sādhu is pronounced as Hau, Śivaji as Hibji, Sukhdeva as Hukhdeva, Daśa as Daha and Sāhukāra as Haukāra in dialects of Marwar.[7] Going back about 25 hundred years we find the place-name spelt as Tauṣāyaṇa by Pāṇini changing to Tohana[8] at some later stage. The earlier change of Vedic Asura to Avestan Ahura[9] and Sanskrit Sindhu to Old Persian Hindu[9a] is well known. The same process operated in the evolution of the name Śaryaṇā in the Ṛgveda[10] and Śaryāṇa[11] or Saryāṇa[12] later to Haryana[13] which, like its original, earlier applied to the western parts of the present state.[14] The consistent operation of this linguistic process of the replacement of sibilants by "Ha"[15] thus justifies the conclusion that the name Sarasvatī also logically underwent the same process in its westward journey and became Harahvaiti or Harkhaiti in Arachocia.

Even in India however there are, as already noted, more than one rivers bearing this name. It is proposed to undertake an exercise here to identify the original Vedic Sarasvatī.

The very name Arbuda Sarasvatī shows that it is of later origin otherwise the association of Arbuda with it would be redundant. We are then left with only the Thanesar Sarasvatī which according to the Imperial Gazetteer of India (IGI),[16] rises in Sirmur State, debouches on the plains at Adbadri, disappears in the sand a few miles farther on and comes up again about three miles to the south of Bhawanipur. It vanishes again at Balchhapar for a short distance to emerge once more and flows on in south-westerly direction across Karnal until it joins the Ghaggar in Patiala territory after a course of about 110 miles. On the way a district canal takes off from it near Pehowa about 24 km. below Thanesar. Running along the towns of Tohana and Sirsa it turns southward to enter Rajasthan in the district of Ganganagar where it vanishes in the sands of the desert.

There is no denying the fact that the name Sarasvatī at present applies to this river described in the I.G.I. It has indeed the partial support of literary evidence going back at least to the Epics. In the Harṣacarita of Bāṇa the Bhairavācārya who initiated Prabhākara-vardhana in Tāntric rites is mentioned as staying in a deserted temple on the bank of the Sarasvatī.[17] On the death of Prabhākaravardhana his cremation takes place on the bank of the Sarasvatī.[18] His queen Yaśovatī precedes him and plunges into fire at the same river.[19] Finally when Harṣavardhana ascends the throne, his forces start on their victory march from the

bank of the same river. Bāṇa presenting a graphic description of this scene describes how the seal of the king drops face downwards on the dry mud of the bank of the holy river and his name is imprinted on the soft earth signifying, as it were the stamping of the earth with the single seal of his sole command.[20] Evidently the river flowing very close to Thanesar, the original capital of the Puṣyabhūtis, was at that time known by the name Sarasvatī.

The Mahâbhârata[21] also describes a large number of tīrthas which are located on the Adbadri-Thanesar Sarasvatī including the Kapâlmocana the Sthāṇvīśvara and the Pṛthūdaka. It specifically mentions the location of the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha at the Sthāṇu Tīrtha and that of Viśvāmitra further on along the Sarasvatī.[22] The celebrated Sthāṇu Tīrtha is located on the northern side of the town. Only about 40 years back the flood waters of the Thanesar-Sarasvatī used to flow into the holy tank at this tīrtha. Its antiquity undoubtedly goes back to the age of the Puṣyabhūtis and it was from this tīrtha that the town and the Janapada[23] acquired the name Sthāṇvīśvara which first changed to Sthāneśvara[24] and then to Thanesar.[25] Pṛthūdaka or Pehowa is named after King Pṛthi or Pṛthu son of Vena who figures as a Ṛṣi in the Ṛgveda.[26]

In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa[27] while describing the return journey of prince Bharata from Girivraja in Kekaya to Ayodhyâ the poet refers to his crossing the joint stream of the Sarasvatī and the Gaṅgā before entering the Bhāruṇḍa forest in the north of the Kīra-matsyas. As we have shown elsewhere[28] this Sarasvatī was also the Adbadri-Thanesar-Sarasvatī while its tributary Gaṅgā represented a small stream in Kurukṣetra named after the holy Gaṅgā.

However there are indications that the river represented in all these references and flowing by the tīrthas like Adbadri, Kapâlamocana, Thanesar and Pehowa actually acquired the name Sarasvatī only at a later stage.

The Pehowa inscription of Bhoja of the Imperial Pratihāra dynasty locates Pṛthūdaka in the vicinity of the Prâcī-Sarasvatī.[29] The Vâmana Purâṇa[30] also gives to this river the name Prâcī-Sarasvatī at one place. In the Bhâgavata-Purāṇa[31] again we specifically get the name Prâcī-Sarasvatī of the river in Brahmāvarta, the country of Manu which too obviously refers to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī. It cannot be argued that the adjective Prâcī meaning eastern applies to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī at any one particular point because it is called Prâcī-Sarasvatī not only at Pehowa but also at Patan (Anhilpatak) in Gujarat[32] and at the holy tīrtha of Puṣkara at Ajmer.[33] Prof. Raychaudhuri[34] therefore rightly remarks that the very application of the adjective Prâcī to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī presupposes the existence of an old river Sarasvatī to its west. As we proceed, the truth of this observation will become evident.

The Epics associate at least four more rivers with the name, Sarasvatī. We may first refer here to the Râmāyaṇa[35] where it describes the westward journey of

the messengers from Ayodhyā to Kekaya to fetch Bharata from his maternal uncle's capital Girivraja on the sad and sudden demise of King Daśaratha. Only the part of their journey in the region of Kurukṣetra is relevant for our purpose.

After crossing the Prācī-Sarasvatī and passing by the town of Puṣkarāvatī, probably the same as Bilaspur,[36] known for the two very old lotus-lakes Kapālamocana and Ṛṇamocana and as the capital of Śrīkaṇṭha Janapada,[37] the messengers approach and ford the celestial river Śaradaṇḍā which has been identified with the present Sadadeni,[38] a tributary of the Markanda river which, as already mentioned, joins the Prācī-Sarasvatī near Pehowa. Another tributary of the Markanda was the Aruṇā, now called Run Cho and mentioned by Vālmīki as Āgneyī.[39]

The Markanda rises at Baraban in the hills of Katasan and after flowing from south-east to south-west for a distance of about 24 kms. passes into the Ambala district at Kala Amb.[40] The main stream, which acquired the name Markanda because of the great Ṛṣi's association with it, was probably better known by the names of its two branches Aruṇā and Śaradaṇḍā in the past. Śaradaṇḍā is apparently the same as Śarāvatī, both signifying 'a river abounding in reeds.'[41] The people occupying the region below the Nahan Shiwaliks along the river and extending westward probably upto the Tangri inherited its name and are known as one of the constituents of the Śālva confederacy of tribes.[42]

A traditional verse describes the Śarāvatī as the boundary between the Prācya and Udīcya divisions of India.[43] Amarakośa[44] fully concurs with this in describing the country to the north of the Śarāvatī as north-west and that to its south as east. Rājaśekhara[45] says practically the same thing in different words when he places Uttarāpatha, another name for the Udīcyas, on the other side of Pṛthūdaka. It is the 'Sadadeni-Aruṇā-Markanda' that flows by the side of Pehowa after meeting the Thanesar-Prācī-Sarasvatī. There is, thus, adequate evidence to support the Śarāvatī-Śaradaṇḍā-Sadadeni equation.

Hemādri[46] quotes the same traditional verse with the reading Sarasvatī for Śarāvatī which suggests that the Śarāvatī-Śaradaṇḍā-Sadadeni was once known as Sarasvatī also. Same is the case with the main river Markanda. When propitiated by the Eternal Sage Mārkaṇḍeya the Sarasvatī, rising at Plakṣa, is stated in the Vāmana Purāṇa[47] to have followed him wherever he led her. It is thus the Sarasvatī itself which is named after sage Mārkaṇḍeya. The Aruṇā, too enjoys a similar situation as it is described in the Mahābhārata as Sarasvatī's own form and brought into being by Sarasvatī herself.[48] All the three sister streams Śaradaṇḍā, Markanda and Aruṇā thus shared the name Sarasvatī.

The next river forded by the messengers after crossing the Śaradaṇḍā is named in the Rāmāyaṇa[49] as Ikṣumatī which has been identified with the Ghaggar flowing by the present town of Panchkula near Chandigarh.[50] The Mahābhārata[51]

describes Ikṣumatī as a river of Kurukṣetra. Literally, the name signifies a river that is rich in sugarcane or whose belt is particularly noteworthy for its fabulous cane crops. This is applicable to the present river Ghaggar which is called Hakra in Rajasthan.

In several villages in the Parganas of Jodhpur and Malani in Rajasthan stone cane-crushers were found which are said to have been used for making gur when the Hakra flowed and supported rich cane crops in the area.[52] Sultan Masaud, son of Mahmud of Ghazni, found the tract around the town of Sirsa, the ancient Śairīṣaka,[53] remarkable for the extensive growth of cane which his forces used to fill up the moat for storming the fortress.[54] The records of Timur's invasion also mention the sugarcane jungles of Tohana.[55] Both the towns of Sirsa and Tohana are situated near the Ghaggar. Ikṣumatī is a derivative name used for the river whose real identity is given away by the adjectives qualifying it. It has been called Pitṛpaitāmahī. Attempts have been made by commentators to explain this adjective to mean 'connected with the ancestors of the Ikṣvākus' or 'frequented by the ancestors of Daśaratha' or 'the country and towns on whose banks were possessed by the Ikṣvākus.[56] Such a construction would, however, be not only far-fetched but also unreasonable in as much as the party comprised the messengers who were, at best, only royal servants and not members of the royal family with reference to whom the river could be called Pitṛpaitāmahī.

As it is, the adjective simply means 'created by God Brahmā who is known also as Prapitāmaha.[57] Now, the river most closely associated with Brahmā is the Sarasvatī.[58] She has been variously described as his daughter,[59] his consort[60] and his first creation among rivers.[61] The alternate reading Devarṣicaritā too fits perfectly in the case of Sarasvatī. Illustrious names among gods and men are connected with her. Vālmiki therefore uses Ikṣumatī only as another name for Sarasvatī and leaves us in no doubt about it. Indumatī, the variant reading for Ikṣumatī, is also a name for Sarasvatī which is supposed to have conveyed the Indumat[62] or Agni-Vaḍavānala to the ocean.[63] The readings Devarṣicaritā and Indumatī are, indeed, so obviously applicable to Sarasvatī that it is difficult to resist the conclusion that whosoever introduced them in the text must have been fully conscious of the poet's intention to refer to this river here. The names Śaradaṇḍā and Ikṣumatī or Indumatī, again, conform to Vālmiki's preference for[64] derivative names, as does the use of Vāruṇī for the Yamunā and Āgneyī for the[65] Aruṇā.

This presents an interesting situation where we have three Sarasvatīs, viz., the Ikṣumatī-Ghaggar-Sarasvatī, the Aruṇā-Śaradaṇḍā-Śārāvatī-Markanda-Sarasvatī and the Kurukṣetra-Thanesar-Sarasvatī, also known as Prācī or Eastern Sarasvatī. While it does call for explanation, it does not defy a satisfactory solution.

The identification of the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatı with the old bed of the Ghaggar in Rajasthan, called Hakra or Wahinda, is not seriously questioned.[66] The difference of view is mainly over the course of the river above Vinaśana or the region about Kalibangan.[67] It is somewhere above this point that the confluence of the Sarasvatı and the Dṛṣadvatı[68] took place. A long distance before this, the Markanda-Sarasvatı joins the Ghaggar three miles above Akalgarh[69] after the Prâcı-Sarasvatī of Thanesar has already merged with it at Urnai near Pehowa.[70]

Now, the Ṛgveda describes the Sarasvatı as the river par excellence, rushing down right from the mountains up to the ocean[71] with a tempestuous roar,[72] breaking and carrying down ridges of hills like lotus-stems[73] and filling the realms of earth and the wide tract of the firmament.[74] It is superior to her companions,[75] and surpasses all other rivers by her majesty[76] and glory.[77] It is fierce,[78] swiftest of the swift,[79] mightiest of her class[80] and best of rivers,[81] best of mothers[82] and even best of goddesses.[83] Neither the Markanda-Sarasvatı nor the Thanesar-Prâcı Sarasvatı could ever lay claim to this description. The latter, although monopolising the name, is indeed but an insignificant rainy-season nullah, hardly fit to be called a river and now almost extinct. It might be somewhat better around the time of Harṣavardhana but could never have been so big as to inspire the Ṛgvedic poets to the extent of eliciting the lofty epithets quoted above. The terrain simply rules out such a possibility.

On the other hand, this picture of the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatı immediately recalls to mind the 2-6 miles wide bed of the Hakra[84] in Rajasthan and the furious flooded Ghaggar inundating vast areas. If ever the Ghaggar was a perennial river—as it undoubtedly was before the Brāhmaṇa period where we find Vinaśana mentioned for the first time—it must have deserved every word of the praise showered on the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatı. Even now, although shorn of its prehistoric grandeur, it presents a formidable spectacle when at the peak of flood.[85] The richness it bestowed on the soil in its belt has earned for it the epithet of Ikṣumatı from Vālmīkı, and won the adjectives like 'possessed of wealth'[86], 'having a golden path,'[87] 'possessed of vigour on account of flood'[88] and 'distributing riches to the whole world'[89] from the Ṛgvedic seers. The Ghaggar-Ikṣumatı was therefore the original and Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī which fact has been acknowledged by the Ādikavi in the use of the adjective Pitṛpaitāmahı.

The validity of this identification can be easily verified. In the later Vedic literature, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras, we find Plakṣa Prāsravaṇa[90] mentioned as the name of the source of the Sarasvatı and Vinaśana[91] as the place of its disappearance in the sands of Bikaner. Plakṣa Prâsravaṇa has been identified with Lavasa reserved forest named after a village lying 30° 42′ N by 77°9′E in lower mountains in Pacchad sub-division of district Nahan in Himachal Pradesh[92] and Vinaśana with the well-known Pre-Harappan/Harappan site of Kalibangan situated

29°.25′N by 74°.5′E some 310 km. north-west of Delhi, in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan.[93] These two points are respectively the source and tail end of the Ghaggar too.

In Ṛgveda VIII. 54.4[94] Sarasvatī is invoked separately with seven rivers while in VI. 61.10, 12[95] she is referred to as seven-sistered. This would suggest that she had seven tributaries. That these included the Indus would be clear from her adjective Sindhūmātā[96] where Sindhu cannot denote the ocean. The other six rivers were in all probability the five Punjab rivers Jhelam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej and the holy Dṛṣadvatī[97] which forms with the Sarasvatī the venue of sacrifices by Bharata Princes in the Ṛgveda,[98] of Dārṣadvata sacrificial sessions in later Vedic literature,[99] and the southern boundary of Brahmāvarta, the holy heartland of Kurukṣetra in the Mahābhārata[100] and the Purāṇas.[101] Obviously the Kubhā cannot claim the seventh position in her place.[102] Where the Sarasvatī is called the seventh[103] the other six have to be the Indus and the five Punjab rivers which find mention as her tributaries in the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā.[104] That this was so at the time of the advent of the Arabs in Sind and till some time later has been conclusively shown by Raverty[105] in his exhaustively documented study of the "Mihran of Sind and its Tributaries." It is, therefore, quite safe to accept the equation of the Vedic Sarasvatī with the Ghaggar as final.

It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that in the age of the Ṛgveda this mighty river flowed from the mountains right up to the ocean which tradition is preserved even in later literature.[106] It was at some point of time between the composition of the nucleus of the Ṛgveda and the age of the Atharva Veda and the Brāhmaṇas that something happened which led to the reduction in the flow and partial diversion of the waters of the Sarasvatī. We come across in literature several stories, anecdotes or episodes containing veiled reference to the drying up of the Sarasvatī and the nature of the event that led to this phenomenon.

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[107] records an incident when the Ṛṣi's expelled Kavaṣa Ailūṣa from a Soma sacrifice being performed on the Sarasvatī with the intention that he should die of thirst in the desert. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[108] also contains a similar reference in the episode of another sacrifice performed by the gods in Kurukṣetra. There the gods are said to have declared that the ant who would gnaw the bow-string of Viṣṇu would be granted constant enjoyment of food and he would find water even in the desert. A similar story occurs in the Salya[109] Parva of the Mahābhārata. While travelling the three brothers Ekata, Dvita and Trita encounter a wolf. Trita runs along the Sarasvatī, and falls into a well. Abandoned by his brothers, he performs a mental sacrifice which attracts the attention of Bṛhaspati who brings the gods to the well. The river-goddess Sarasvatī shoots forth from the well and Trita is rescued. Evidently in the time to which these stories relate the Sarasvatī had ceased to be a perennial river and people had

started digging wells in its bed[110] to tap the underground reserves of water which were replenished by the rainy season floods.

The death or drying up of the Sarasvatī, named in the Purāṇas as the spouse of Nārāyaṇa,[111] is implied in the story of her quarrel with her co-wife Gaṅgā in which both exchange curses leading to a pledge by the former to end her existence.[112] Ultimately, as decreed by Nārāyaṇa, Sarasvatī is persuaded to stay on and only a small part of her self descends into the holy land of Bhārata as Prāci-Sarasvatī.[113] This story would be easily seen to conceal a reference to the reduction in the flow of the holy river and the transfer of its name to another small stream on its east.

The Purāṇas[114] describe the conveying of Agni-Vaḍavānala to the western ocean at the instance of God Brahmā by his daughter Sarasvatī who flowed underground and surfaced only when she felt exhausted on account of the unbearable heat.[115] In one case this fire was created by Ṛṣi Pippalāda for destruction of gods who had utilised the bones of his father Dadhīci for manufacturing weapons for killing the demons.[116] Emerging from Plakṣa on the Himālaya, Sarasvatī is obstructed on its way by a mountain wanting to marry her forcibly. Under the pretext of taking bath before the ceremony Sarasvatī entrusts the fire to the mountain which is immediately burnt down by it.[117] This is said to have happened in the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara.[118] Again in the Vaivasvata Manvantara the same fire is born as Aurvānala to a woman belonging to the tribe of the Bhṛgus who were attacked and plundered by Kṣatriyas. The woman was pregnant and escaped concealing the foetus in her thigh (Ūru) which gave the name Aurvānala to the fire that started consuming the earth immediately on its emergence.[119] According to another version the woman gave birth to Ṛṣi Aurva who created the fire which was named after him. The fire created for destruction of the Haihaya Kṣatriyas who had indulged in large-scale slaughter of the Bhṛgus was however confined to the ocean by Sarasvatī.[120] Sarasvatī is said to have conveyed Aurvānala in a golden pitcher and taking its rise at Pippalādāśrama in the Himalayas it flowed westward reaching Kedāra where it pierced the earth's crust to go underground burning with the fire in her hands.[121] It broke forth again at Bhūtiśvara after passing the evil region and then flowed towards Prabhāsa passing through Śrīkaṇṭhadeśa, Kurukṣetra, Virāṭanagara, Gopāyanagiri, Kharjūrivana, Mārkaṇḍāśrama and Arbudāraṇya[122] etc. The Skanda Purāṇa predicts the birth of another Vaḍavānala at the end of the current Manvantara[123] and thus implies a connection between Vaḍavānala and the Deluge that is traditionally associated with the end of a Manvantara.

Although the Vaḍavānala episode is related in several versions in different sources[124] its essential features do not suffer any serious change. Some interesting points deserve special notice here. Firstly the river Sarasvatī which conveyed the fire to the western ocean flowed through the country of Kurukṣetra which is specifically mentioned along with Śrīkaṇṭhadeśa which comprised its northern part[125]

and Virāṭanagara which lay to its southwest near Jaipur.[126] Secondly the Bhṛgus, with whom Aurvānala is associated, occupied the lower or western part of Kurukṣetra in ancient times as the tradition of construction by Paraśurāma Bhārgava of five pools with the blood of the cruel Kṣatriyas at Rāmahrada, present Ram Rai near Jind, suggests.[127] Thirdly the text mentions the emergence of the burning Aurva after a violent eruption in Kurudeśa[128] which is most befitting because while the concealment of the foetus in or its birth from the thigh (Ūru) is obviously mythical the emergence of one of the Bhṛgus, after lying low for some time in Kurudeśa, to avenge the slaughter of his people is most natural. The hoary antiquity and commonness of the venue of the two events is undoubtedly the only explanation of the introduction of the Bhṛgus in the Vaḍavānala episode. And lastly the upheaval was volcanic in nature that engulfed Kurudeśa and the mountain range to its north and drastically tampered with the source and course of the Sarasvatī which flowed red with the rubble thrown up and carried down in the process.

All this finds expression in another form in the story of the Sarasvatī carrying bloody water[129] for a complete year[130] as a result of the curse of Viśvāmitra who felt annoyed on her failure to deliver Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha to him. Now significantly it was not the real Sarasvatī that flowed red with blood but her own other self named Aruṇā in the Mahābhārata[131] and Āgneyī earlier in the Rāmāyaṇa.[132] This Aruṇā has been identified with the present Rūn river[133] which was at one time a major tributary of the river Markanda which crosses the G.T. Road near the town of Shahbad in district Kurukṣetra about 19 km. from Ambala.[134] Markanda or Aruṇā was one of the rivers that gained from the diversion of Sarasvatī's waters and most probably it emerged in the process as an entirely new river. This is undoubtedly the meaning of another episode according to which Sarasvatī on being propitiated agreed to follow the Eternal Sage Mārkaṇḍeya[135] who had, with his own eyes, witnessed the Great Deluge in the age of Manu Vaivasvata.[136] This reference too clearly connects the diversion of Sarasvatī's waters with the Great Deluge.

The sequel to the Vasiṣṭhāpavāha episode is also relevant here. Sarasvatī, flowing red with blood, in her misery, complains to Vasiṣṭha about Viśvāmitra's curse.[137] The sage travels from Arbuda to her source Plakṣa and, much agitated against Viśvāmitra, goes into meditation repeating the Vāruṇa mantra while fixing his gaze on the ground.[138] As a result the earth is pierced at two points: from one gushes forth the Sarasvatī with water purified of the blood and from the other is born the Sāmbhramatī named after the Ṛṣi's Sambhrama or agitation against Viśvāmitra.[139] The Sarasvatī and the Sāmbhramatī in this episode undoubtedly refer to the Thanesar or Prācī-Sarasvatī and the Somb torrent with the old bed of which has been identified the Ṛgvedic Aśmanvatī-Dṛṣadvatī,[140] reSanskritised into Sāmbhramatī in the medieval age.[141] The two have their sources close to each other

in the lower Shiwaliks above Adbadri. The Thanesar Sarasvatī and the Sāmbhramatī or the present Somb torrent meeting the Western Jumna Canal at Dadupur Canal works were thus the other rivers that shared Sarasvatī's diverted waters, a large portion of which probably started flowing eastward into the Yamunā also through rivers like the Giri. That is why the Aruṇā-Markanda remained only a rainy season torrent and with the increase in the importance of the town of Sthāṇviśvara, now also called Kurukṣetra, the name Sarasvatī was appropriated by the insignificant stream flowing by its side as the name Prāchī Sarasvatī shows.

The event, probably a large-scale tectonic-seismic-volcanic upheaval, rightly described as the Deluge, was indeed so gigantic in proportions that it wrought serious changes in the topography of the Shiwaliks between the Yamunā and the Ravi and affected the whole of the region along the Sarasvatī lying between the Himalayas beyond Nahan on one side and the Rajasthan desert on the other. That this event led to the disappearance of the Sarasvatī is specifically implied in the statement that the river vanished underground on account of the Vaḍavānala[142] which it was made to carry to the ocean.

The episode of destruction of the Krauñca mountain by god Kārttikeya reflects the volcanic aspect of the upheaval. According to the Mahābhārata[143] the gods led by Brahmā brought Kārttikeya to the holy Sarasvatī and annointed him as the Commander of their army. There in the fight against the Daityas Kārttikeya rent assunder, with the śakti given by Agni, the Krauñca mountain sheltered on which the demon Bāṇa, son of Bali, tormented the gods. The involvement of fire in the destruction of the Krauñca mountain near the Sarasvatī river clearly points to volcanic eruption in the hilly tract about the upper reaches of the river.

The story of Tripuradāha by god Śiva[144] also appears to rise from the same background. Here the firy missile shot by the great god burns down Tripura with all its Asura population and dumps it into the Western Ocean.[145] It was the Sarasvatī that provided the track for his chariot.[146] The great magnitude of destruction is implied in the suggestion that Tripura actually represented not one but a complex of three prosperous Asura cities.[147]

Yet another episode in the Mahābhārata,[148] in which the Great Deluge appears to find an echo, is that of sage Utathya who drinks off the entire water of the ocean on Varuṇa's refusal to return his bride Bhadrā whom the god had forcibly abducted. The country is reduced to a desert and Utathya asks the Sarasvatī to go invisible into it so that, forsaken by her, it becomes inauspicious.

There is therefore sufficient evidence to justify the conclusion that according to traditional belief it was the Great Deluge that led to the disappearance about Kalibangan in the sands of Rajasthan, of the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī represented by the present Ghaggar river, as a result of diversion of its waters and loss of its catchment area.

We are now in a position to draw upon the testimony of archaeology to substantiate this traditional belief in the occurrence of the Great Deluge. Let us refer to the excavations at the Pre-Harappan/Harappan site of Kalibangan or Vinaśana carried out by a very competent team consisting of senior officers of the Archaeological Survey of India including J.P. Joshi and led by B.K. Thapar and B.B. Lal.[149] In his remarks on the end of the Pre-Harappan or Period I Kalibangan settlement Prof. Lal[150] says that at several places in the trenches was observed cleavage-cum-displacement of the strata and walls, which evidently was the result of some earth movement. He considers it most likely that the site was deserted because of an earthquake. Also in his view the occupation of Period II did not come into being immediately after the end of Period I but about 200 years later. Thapar[151] also subscribes to this view and adds that during the time the site remained abandoned a thin layer of sand, largely infertile and wind-blown accumulated over the ruins.

No more observations upon the extent or intensity of the seismic activity that destroyed the Pre-Harappan phase of Kalibangan are available but whatever has been said is enough to justify the conclusion that it came in the form of a catastrophic earthquake probably accompanied by strong volcanic eruptions, that rendered the country uninhabitable for several centuries and must inevitably have involved terrible damage to life and property. Nor is there any reason to believe that its impact was confined to the region of Kalibangan. Prof. Lal himself admits elsewhere[152] the possibility of a tectonic movement involving the divide between the Indus and Gaṅgā systems and accounting for the drying up of the Ghaggar as a result of the diversion of some of its tributaries to the Yamunā as well as for the discovery of the water-laid deposits of Ochre Ware preceding the painted Grey Ware at the archaeological sites like Hastināpura, Ahicchatrā, Bahadarabad, Nasirpur, Jhinjhina and Atranjikhera in the Gaṅgā basin. However instead of identifying this tectonic movement with the seismic activity that hit the Pre-Harappan Kalibangan around B.C. 3000 as indicated by available evidence he confines it to the region of the source of these rivers where the Ghaggar and Yamunā basins come close to each other and places it about the first half of the second millennium B.C. so as to synchronise with the desertion of the site of Harappan Kalibangan as a result of the drying up of the Ghaggar and with the supposed later date of the Gaṅgā basin O.C.W. sites. It looks rather improbable that a tectonic movement involving the expansive divide between the Indus and the Gaṅgā systems should have been confined only to the region of their sources. It is also to be remembered that literary evidence supports a fierce seismic-tectonic-volcanic activity extensively involving the long course of the river Sarasvatī and its valley and not the Gaṅgā system which hasn't thrown up any positive proof of widespread seismic upheaval like the one that destroyed Pre-Harappan Kalibangan. Neither are the courses of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā reported to have suffered any major changes at any stage in their known history.

Wheeler's sensational theory of destruction of Harappa and Mohenjodaro by the savage Aryan hordes of India is no more taken seriously.[153] It was indeed as far back as in 1940 that M.R. Sahni noticed silt deposits perched many feet above the level of the Indus plain near the city of Hyderabad and suggested the destruction of these cities as a result of serious floods caused by major tectonic upheavals.[154] His view gathered support in only 1960 when a field party of the Pennsylvania University Museum undertook an archaeological survey of the Arabian coast of West Pakistan and discovered settlements of the Harappan era that had clearly been seaports but were now located as far as thirty miles inland showing clearly that the coast-line has risen considerably during the past 4000 years, with the initial rise apparently having occurred during the Harappan period.[155] It is interesting to note that in his extensive surveys conducted in the same year in southern Baluchistan and the lower Indus Raikes[156] also reports a marked coastal uplift along the northern flank of the Arabian sea about the Harappan times which according to him, might have been more extensive so as to cover even the Indus Valley. Raikes[157] asserts that the uplift, accompanied by more or less violent earthquake shocks, would not only have caused destruction of cities and settlements but would have disrupted the system of river and coast-wise communication on which the commercial life of the culture must have largely depended. And this event, as he pertinently observes,[158] may have occurred hundreds of thousands of years ago or merely a few thousand years, and it must be admitted that some of the geologists consulted on the subject tend to think in terms of hundreds of thousands of years which he ascribes to a certain reluctance on their part to consider anything more recent than 20,000 years old as geology. The view of Raikes is supported by a number of scholars[159] and this makes it quite safe to accept the possibility of the occurrence of this event around 3000 B.C.[160]

Although Raikes suspects Sehwan, some 90 miles down-stream from Mohenjodaro, to be the most probable area of tectonic disturbance Lambrick believes[161] that an avulsion and major change of course by the Indus took place considerably upstream of Mohenjodaro. On the other hand geological evidence of large-scale rock-faulting in the region[162] justifies the suggestion that these earth-movements also embraced the region further north-east to the Simla foothills across the Thar and the Indo-Gangetic divide[163] and upraised the entire bed of the Sarasvatī and the floor of the sea of its confluence.[164] They might indeed be even more widespread because Sir Leonard Woolley[165] also found at Ur in Mesopotamia indubitable proof of a flood which must have engulfed all the cities in the delta sometime before B.C. 3000. The significance of the synchronism and of the identical nature of the event can hardly be overemphasised and it is no more possible to dismiss the story of the Great Deluge as a myth now that its literary evidence finds full support in the concrete testimony of independent archaeological discoveries at different places.

The dating of the event agrees well with literary evidence as well as the testimony of Kalibangan. It is in the Atharvaveda that we meet with the first inklings of the occurrence of the Great Deluge in the mention of the term Nāvaprabhraṁśana which signifies the place of Manu's landing (abandoning the ship) called Manoravasarpaṇa in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[167] and Naubandhana in later[168] literature. As already observed the Great Deluge apparently took place at some time between the composition of the nucleus of the Ṛgveda and the composition of the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmaṇas. The generally accepted dating of the Ṛgveda to 2500 B.C. by Winternitz,[169] is not far removed from 3000 B.C. and one cannot afford to be dogmatic on this point. If a landmark is available the difference of 500 yrs. becomes meaningless in case of probable dating of the events of hoary antiquity and for works the composition of which undoubtedly stretched over long periods of time.

At Kalibangan the following dates have been assigned to the two excavated levels of settlements by Lal and Thapar on the basis of C^{14} readings:

	Uncorrected	*Corrected after Dales*[170]	*Corrected after Ralph Michael and Han*[171]
		Period I—Pre-Harappan	
Lal	2400-2250	2950-2800	2930/2960-2700/2820
Thapar	2450-2300	3000-2850	2970/2990-2850/2870
		Period II—Harappan	
Lal	2200-1700	2700-1900	2630/2670-2060
Thapar	2300-1750	2850-1950	2850/2870-2110

Keeping in view the fact that the C^{14} dating method is not yet considered entirely fool-proof[172] one need not be too rigid about these date-brackets. However even if they are taken at their face value one can safely place the end of the Pre-Harappan phase at Kalibangan around 3000 B.C. at the latest[173] as a result of the Great Deluge that took place in the time of Manu Vaivasvata.[174]

The combined effect of all this evidence makes it appear most probable that the earth movements postulated by Lal and Raikes were caused during the same fierce seismic-tectonic-volcanic upheaval which is known in literature as the Great Deluge that wrought extensive changes in the topography of the Shiwalik belt between the Yamunā and Ravi resulting in the diversion of the waters of the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī or Ghaggar about 3000 B.C. and leading to its ultimate drying up around Vinaśana in the sands of Bikaner.

It must be noted however that the source of the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar shifted down to Plakṣa-Prāsravaṇa or Lavasa Pachhad as a result of the Great Deluge before the compilation of the Atharvaveda where Manu's escape from the 'Flood' is first mentioned.[175] In the Ṛgvedic age the source lay above the permanent snow-line in the Himalayan glaciers which is evident from the description of the Sarasvatī as the mightiest of rivers. This original source is now feeding the sub-terranean flow beneath the Ghaggar.[176] The event is vividly described in the Skanda Purāṇa[177] in a tradition which is undoubtedly of great antiquity.

Notes and References

1. See Darian Steven, Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī—An Incidence of Mythological Projection, East And West, New Series, Vol. 26, No. 3-4 (Sept.-Dec. 1976), pp. 153-166.
2. 57.30 (ii).....

 सर्वाः पुण्याः सरस्वत्यः सर्वाः गङ्गाः समुद्रगाः ॥
3. Cr. ed. Śalya, 37 3-28; Also see Vâmana Purâṇa, Cr. ed. Varanasi 1968, Saromâhâtmya, 16.17-38 and 36. 54.
4. Hillebrandt Alfred, Vedic Mythology, Two vols., Delhi 1981, Vol. II, p. 210 and Vedic Index, 3rd Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. II, pp. 434 and 437.
5. It takes its rise on Mount Abu, traverses the contiguous forest (अर्बुदारण्य) and flows past Patan into the Rann of Cutch. It finds mention in Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, XXXV. 38. and a grant of Mûlarâja Chaulukya in the tenth century A.D. Vide Indian Antiquary VI, p. 192.
6. For a fresh examination of the question of Aryan origins see Sethna K.D., The Problem of Aryan Origins, Calcutta 1980.
7. Cf. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, pp. 176-191.
8. Agrawal V.S., India as Known to Pāṇini, 2nd edn., Varanasi 1963, p. 74.
9. Tayler Isaac, The Origin of the Aryans, Reprint, Delhi 1980, pp. 184-186.

9a. Agrawala V.S., Bhârata Kı Maulika Ekatâ (Hindi), Allahabad V.S. 2011, p. 30f. Also Tola Fernando and Dragonetti Carmen, India and Greece before Alexander, A.B.O.R.I. Vol. LXVII (Prts i-iv) 1986, pp. 159-194, esp. p. 164.

10. Vedic Index, II. 364.
11. Shastri K.D., The Gaṇapāṭha ascribed to Pāṇini, Kurukṣetra 1967, p. 209.
12. Gaṇaratnamahodadhi of Vardhamâna, Ed. Eggeling Julius, Reprint, Delhi 1963, IV. 300, com. and n. 7, p. 338 f. Alternate readings Saryāṇā and Sāryāṇa are also available.
13. See Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.

14. It embraced the tract lying between 28°.30′ and 30°. N by 75°.45′ and 76°.30′E. chiefly comprising the eastern half of Hisar district, part of Rohtak district and parts of the states of Jind and Patiala. Vide Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1908, Vol. XXIII, p. 418.
15. Cf. Woolner A.C., Introduction to Prakrit, Lahore 1939, p. 17.
16. Vol. XXII, p. 97.
17. Ed. Parab K.P., Bombay 1912, p. 102.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
21. Cr. ed. See Tirthayātrāparva in Vanaparva, particularly chs. 80-84.
22. Śalya, 42.4.
23. Harṣacarita, Ch. III, p. 97.
24. Matsya Purāṇa, 13.31; Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣti Khaṇḍa, 17. 195; and Nīlamata Purāṇa, Ed. Vreese K.De., Leiden 1936, verse 1054.
25. See Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
26. I. 112.15.
27. Cr. Ed. Vol. II, ed. Vaidya P.L., Oriental Institute, Baroda 1962, Ayodhyā, 65.1-10.
28. *Op. cit.*, pp. 74-87.
29. Pehowa Inscription of Imperial Pratihâra Dynasty, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, p. 187, 11. 14-15.
30. Sm. 21.19:

 स्नात्वा शुद्धिमवाप्नोति यत्र प्राची सरस्वती ।
 देवमार्गप्रतिष्ठा या देवमार्गेण निःसृता ॥

31. Gita Press ed. 4.19.1:

 अथादीक्षत राजा तु हयमेधशतेन सः ।
 ब्रह्मावर्ते मनोः क्षेत्रे यत्र प्राची सरस्वती ॥

32. Indian Antiquary VI, p. 192.
33. Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣti Khaṇḍa, 18. 220-221:

 पुष्करारण्यमासाद्य प्राची यत्र सरस्वती ।
 मतिः स्मृतिः शुभा प्रज्ञा मेधाबुद्धिर्दया परा ॥
 सरस्वत्यास्तु पर्यायाष्षडेते संप्रकीर्तिताः ।
 ततः प्रभृति यत्रासौ प्राचीभूता सरस्वती ॥

34. Studies in Indian Antiquities, Calcutta 1958, p. 129.
35. Ayodhyā, 62. 10. ff.
36. For identification see Bharadwaj, O.P., *op. cit.*, p. 91. It is situated 77°.18′E by 30°.18′N. on the Mulana-Chhachhrauli road in Ambala district.

37. Kathāsaritsāgara, 40.42:

अभूच्छ्रीकण्ठनिलये विलासपुरनामनि ।
पुरे विनयशीलाख्यो नाम्नान्वर्थेन भूपतिः ॥

38. Bhargava P.L., The Geography of Ṛgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, pp. 72, 100.
39. Rām. Ayodhyā, 65.3; For identification see Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, p. 76 f.
40. Sirmur Gazetteer, Shimla 1969, p. 11.
41. Cf. Ram Gopal, India of the Vedic Kalpasūtras, Delhi 1959, p. 95 f.
42. This is evident from the following verse quoted by Kāśikā-vṛtti on Pāṇini iv.1.73, Vaijayantī Kośa 1.31. 38-39 and Candravṛtti on Candravyākaraṇa 2.4.103:

उदुम्बरास्तिलखला मद्रकारा युगन्धराः ।
मूलिगाः शरदण्डाश्च साल्वावयवसंज्ञिताः ॥

43. The verse is quoted by Kāśikā on Pāṇini 1.11.75, Kṣirasvāmin's commentary on Amarakośa 2.1.6-7 and Haradatta on Āpastamba Dharmasūtra 2.7.17.17:

प्रागुदञ्चौ विभजते हंसः क्षीरोदके यथा ।
विदुषां शब्दसिद्धयर्थं सा नः पातु शरावती ॥

44. Ed. Sharma Haradutt, Pune 1941, ii. 7-8:

लोकोऽयं भारतं वर्षं शरावत्यास्तु योऽवधेः ।
देशः प्राग् दक्षिणः प्राच्य उदीच्यः पश्चिमोत्तरः ॥

45. Kāvyamīmāṁsā, Ed. Sharma Kedaranath, Patna 1954, Ch. 17, p. 227.
46. See Kane P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol. I, p. 351.
47. Sm., 11.23:

प्रत्युवाच महात्मानं मार्कण्डेयं महामुनिम् ।
यत्र त्वं नेष्यसे विप्र तत्र यास्याम्यतन्द्रिता ॥

48. Śalya, 42.24: (ii)

अरुणामानयामास स्वां तनुं भरतर्षभ ।

49. Ayodhyā, 62.12A:

अजकूलां ततः प्राप्य बोधीनां नगरं ययुः ।
पितृपैतामहीं पुण्यां तेरुरिक्षुमतीं नदीम् ॥

50. Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, p. 93 ff.
51. Ādi., 3.141:

कुरुक्षेत्रं च वसतां नदीमिक्षुमतीमनु ।
जघन्यजस्तक्षकस्य श्रुतसेनेति यः श्रुतः ॥

52. Ojha Gauri Shanker Hira Chand, Ojha Nibandha Saṅgraha (Hindi), Vol. I, Udaipur 1954, p. 25.
53. Mentioned under Pāṇini iv. 2.80. See Agrawal V.S., 1963, p. 74 and Mbh. Sabhā, 32.6:

शैरीषकं महेत्थं च वशे चक्रे महाद्युतिः ।
आक्रोशं चैव राजर्षिः तेन युद्धमभून्महत् ॥

54. Whitehead R.B., 'The River Courses of Punjab and Sind,' Indian Antiquary, 61 (1932), pp. 163-169, esp. p. 164.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Vide Gujarati Press edn. of Rām., Vol. II, p. 803.
57. Apte V.S., The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 3rd ed. Bombay 1924, p. 661, col. ii.
58. It is called Brahmanadī; See Bhāgavata Purāṇa, 1.7.2 and 9.16.23.
59. Vāmana Purāṇa, 23.13:

तत्र देवीं ददर्शाथ पुण्यां पापविमोचिनीम् ।
प्लक्षजां ब्रह्मणः पुत्रीं हरिजिह्वां सरस्वतीम् ॥

and Mbh. Śānti, 121.24:

तथोक्ता ब्रह्मकन्येति लक्ष्मीर्वृत्तिः सरस्वती ।
दण्डनीतिर्जगद्धात्री दण्डो हि बहुविग्रहः ॥

60. Devībhāgavata Purāṇa, 2.9.6.17:

लक्ष्मीः सरस्वती गङ्गा तिस्रो भार्या हरेरपि ।
प्रेम्णा समास्तास्तिष्ठन्ति सततं हरिसन्निधौ ॥

61. Vāmana Purāṇa, 23.44 (i)

पूर्वं नदीयं प्रपितामहेन सृष्टा समं भूतगणैः समस्तैः ॥

Note the use of प्रपितामह an exact equivalent of पितृपितामह

Mbh. Anuśāsana, 134.15 calls it the first among rivers:

एषा सरस्वती पुण्या नदीनामुत्तमा नदी ।
प्रथमा सर्वसरितां नदी सागरगामिनी ॥

62. Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 166, col. i.
63. Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, Venkateshwar Press ed. 17.53:

समाहूय ततो देवीं स्वां सुतां पद्मसंभवः ।
उवाच पुत्रि गच्छ त्वं गृहीत्वाग्निं महोदधिम् ।

64. Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
66. Cf. Raychaudhuri, H.C., *op. cit.*, p. 134 f; Oldham C.F., 'The Sarasvati and the Lost River of the Indian Desert, J.R.A.S. 1893 (Series 3 vol. 25), pp. 49-76, esp. p. 51 and Indras, The Lost Sarasvati, Vallabh Vidyanagar 1967, p. 102 n. and p. 138 ff.
67. For identification of Vinaśana with Kalibangan, Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-43.
68. Bhargava (*op. cit.*, p. 57) places it below Manaktheri near Badopal and rightly identifies the Dṛṣadvatī with the old bed now occupied by the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal. Also n. 102 infra.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
70. Dey, Nando Lal, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, third edn. Delhi 1971, p. 88.
71. VII. 95.2: यती गिरिभ्य आ समुद्रात् ।
72. VI. 61.8: अमश्चरति रोरुवत् ।
73. VI. 61.2: सानु गिरीणां तविषेभिरूर्मिभिः
74. VI. 61.11: आपप्रुषी पार्थिवान्युरु रजो अन्तरिक्षम् ।
75. VII. 95.4: उत्तरा (सखीभ्यः) ।
76. VII. 95.1: महिना सिन्धुरन्याः ।
77. VI. 61.13: द्युम्नेभिरन्याः ।
78. VI. 61.7: घोरा ।
79. VI. 61.13: अपसामपस्तमा ।
80. VII. 96.1: असुर्या नदीनाम् ।
81. ii. 41.16: नदीतमे ।
82. *Ibid.*, अम्बितमे ।
83. *Ibid.*, देवीतमे ।
84. Oldham, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
85. Ambala District Gazetteer, Chandigarh 1984, p. 111.
86. RV, vii. 95.4: राया युजा ।
87. RV, vi. 61.7: हिरण्यवर्तनिः ।
88. RV, vi. 61.3: वाजेभिर्वाजिनीवती ।
89. RV, vii. 95.2: रायश्चेतन्ती भुवनस्य भूरेः ।
90. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 55.
91. Cambridge History of India, Vol. I, 3rd Indian Reprint, Delhi 1968, p. 105.
92. Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-19.
93. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-43.
94. पूषा विष्णुर्हवनं मे सरस्वत्यवन्तु सप्त सिन्धवः ।
आपो वातः पर्वतासो वनस्पतिः शृणोतु पृथिवी हवम् ॥

95. उत नः प्रिया प्रियासु सप्तस्वसा सुजुष्टा । सरस्वती स्तोम्या भूत् ।
त्रिषधस्था सप्तधातुः पञ्च जाता वर्धयन्ती । वाजे वाजे हव्या भूत् ।

96. RV, vii. 36.6:

आ यत् साकं यशसो वावशानाः सरस्वती सप्तथी सिन्धुमाता ।

97. Also called Aśmanvatī; both names denote literally a river 'full of stones' or 'bringing down stones.'

98. iii. 23.4.

99. Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa, xxv. 10; Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra, vi. 6; Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xxiv-5; Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xiii. 29; Lāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, x. 15 and Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra, I. 1.2. etc.

100. Vana, 81.175.

101. Vāmana Purāṇa, 1.1; Manusmṛti II. 17. gives it the name of Brahmāvarta.

102. Dṛṣadvatī has been identified with Somb torrent and the old bed now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal. Vide Bharadwaj, O.P., The Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī, Paper presented at the XXXII, ICANAS, Hamburg 1986.

103. RV, vii. 36.6, See supra n. 96.

104. XXXIV. 11:

105. J.A.S.O.B. Vol. LXI, Prt. I, Extra No. 1892, pp. 471-3 and 475 f. First part of the article appeared in J.A.S.O.B. Vol. LXI, Prt. I, No. III-1892. pp. 155-297.

106. Cf. Mbh. Anuśāsana, 134.15, See supra n. 61.

107. ii. 19, Also Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa, xii. 3.

108. XIV. 1.1.8.

109. 35. 7-51.

110. The story specifically places the well in the river bed:
Mbh. Śalya, 35.53:

उदपानं च तं दृष्ट्वा प्रशस्य च पुनः पुनः ।
नदीगतमदीनात्मा प्राप्तो विनशनं तदा ॥

111. See for instance Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, ii. ch. 6.17(i):

लक्ष्मीः सरस्वती गङ्गा तिस्रो भार्या हरेरपि ।

It is identical with Devībhāgavata, 2.9.6.17 which has been quoted above under n. 60.

112. *Ibid.*, 70-71.

113. *Ibid.*, ii. 7.1:

पुण्यक्षेत्रे ह्याजगाम भारते सा सरस्वती ।
गंगाशापेन कलया स्वयं तस्थौ हरेः पदम् ॥

114. Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, 17.53, See n. 63 supra.
Also Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣṭi Khaṇḍa, 18.198.

115. Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, 33.44; Also cf. Dave, S.K., The Sarasvati Purāṇa, Purāṇa, Vol. X, No. 1, Jan. 1968, p. 74.
116. Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, ch. 32.
117. *Ibid.*, 33.89.
118. *Ibid.*, 35.34.
119. *Ibid.*, 35.6.
120. *Ibid.*, 34.36.
121. *Ibid.*, 35. 21-26.
122. *Ibid.*, 35. 30-41.
123. *Ibid.*, 35.14.
124. See Chitrav Siddheshvara Shastri, Prācīna Caritra Kośa (Hindi), Pune 1964, p. 105.
125. Its capital was Bilaspur 33 miles north-west of Saharanpur on the road to Ambala, see Dey, *op cit.*, p. 191.
126. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
127. Bhargava, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
128. Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa, 35.5:

कालान्तरे ततो भित्त्वा कुरुदेशं महाप्रभः।
निर्गतोत्तंभितशिरा ज्वलदास्योऽतिभीषणः॥

129. *Ibid.*, Nāgara Khaṇḍa, 175.13.
130. Vāmana Purāṇa, Sm., 19.22.
131. Śalya, 42.24 (ii), See n. 48 supra.
132. See supra.
133. Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, p. 76 f.
134. Ambala District Gazetteer, Lahore 1893, p. 6.
135. Vāmana Purāṇa, Sm., 11.23, See n. 47 supra.
136. Mbh. Vana, chs. 186-187, and Bhāgavata Purāṇa, xii. 8-9.
137. Skanda Purāṇa, Nāgara Khaṇḍa, 173.
138. *Ibid.*, 9-10:

एवमुक्त्वा स विप्रर्षिरवतीर्य धरातले।
गतः प्लक्षतरुं यस्मादवतीर्णा सरस्वती॥
समाधिं तत्र संधाय निविष्टो धरणीतले।
संभ्रमं परमं गत्वा विश्वामित्रस्यचोपरि॥

139. *Ibid.*, 12 and 14:

रन्ध्रद्वयेन विप्रेन्द्रा लोचनाभ्यां निरीक्षणात्।
एकस्य सलिलं क्षिप्रं यत्र जाता सरस्वती॥
द्वितीयस्तु प्रवाहो यः संभ्रमात्तस्य निर्गतः।
सा च सांभ्रमतीनाम नदी जाता धरातले॥

140. Bharadwaj, O.P., Identification of the Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī, Paper presented at the XXXII, ICANAS Hamburg 1986.
141. Bharadwaj, Studies, p. 178.
142. Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣṭi Khaṇḍa, 18.198.
143. Mbh. Śalya, 43.50, 51:

तत: कुमारमादाय देवा ब्रह्मपुरोगमा: ।
अभिषेकार्थमाजग्मु: शैलेन्द्रं सहितास्तत: ।
पुण्यां हैमवतीं देवीं सरिच्छ्रेष्ठां सरस्वतीम् ।
समन्तपञ्चके या वै त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुता ॥

and 45.71-73:

बाणो नामाथ दैतेयो बले: पुत्रो महाबल: ।
क्रौञ्चं पर्वतमासाद्य देवसंघानबाधत ॥
तमभ्ययान्महासेन: सुरशत्रुमुदारधी: ।
स कार्त्तिकेयस्य भयात्क्रौञ्चं शरणमेयिवान् ॥
तत: क्रौञ्चं महामन्यु: क्रौञ्चनादनिनादितम् ।
शक्त्या विभेद भगवान्कार्त्तिकेयोऽग्निदत्तया ॥

144. Mbh. Karṇa, Ch. 24.
145. *Ibid.*, v. 120:

त्रैलोक्यसारं तमिषुं मुमोच त्रिपुरं प्रति ।
तत्सासुरगणं दग्ध्वा प्राक्षिपत्पश्चिमार्णवे ॥

146. *Ibid.*, v. 75:

कर्म सत्यं तपोऽर्थश्च विहितास्तत्र रश्मय: ।
अधिष्ठानं मनस्त्वासीत्परिरथ्यं सरस्वती ॥

147. *Ibid.*, v. 14:

ततो मय: स्वतपसा चक्रे धीमान्पुराणि ह ।
त्रीणि काञ्चनमेकं तु रौप्यं कार्ष्णायसं तथा ।

148. Anuśāsana, 139. 22-26.
149. For excavation notes see Indian Archaeology, 1961-62, p. 39; 1962-63, p. 20 ff; and 1963-64, p. 30 ff.
150. Kalibangan's Contribution to the Understanding of the Indus Civilization, I.I.A.S. Shimla, November 2-7, 1977.
151. South Asian Archaeology, Ed. Hammond Norman, London 1973, p. 85 ff. and Ancient Cities of the Indus, Ed. Possehl, Delhi 1979, pp. 196-203.

152. 'A Deluge? Which Deluge? Yet another Facet of Problem of the Copper Hoard Culture,' American Anthropologist, Vol. 70, 1968, pp. 857-863; Abstracts produced in Purātattva No. 5, 1971-72, pp. 101-104. For opposition to the possibility of a deluge in the Gaṅgā O.C.W. times see Sharma R.P. in Ecology and Archaeology of Western India, Delhi 1977, pp. 75-77. Shri Aggarwal, R.C. Director, Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan (Retd.) informs us that O.C.W. sites in Rajasthan have been dated to 3000 B.C.
153. Cf. Raikes Robert L., The End of the Ancient Cities of the Indus, reproduced in Possehl, *op. cit.*, p. 298.
154. Dales George F., The Decline of the Harappans, reproduced in Possehl, *op. cit.*, p. 309.
155. *Ibid.*
156. *Op. cit.*, p. 302.
157. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
158. *Ibid.*, p. 302.
159. *Ibid.*
160. Dales, *op. cit.*, p. 309.
161. "The Indus Flood Plain and the Indus Civilization" reproduced in Possehl, p. 321.
162. Dales, *op. cit.*, p. 309.
163. Suraj Bhan, Journal of Haryana Studies, Jan. 1969, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 10.
164. Indras, *op. cit.*, Preface, p. iii., His dating of the event around 1500 B.C. is untenable. Rao S.R. assigns the Flood to 1900 B.C., without giving any details of the evidence in support of his view. See The Decipherment of the Indus Script, Delhi 1982, p. 306.
165. Ur Excavations, The Early Period, 1958, p. 18.
166. XIX. 39.8.
167. i.8.1.
168. Mbh. Vana, 185.47. and Nilamata Purāṇa, Verses 40, 41, 164 and 178.
169. Some Problems of Indian Literature, Reprint, Delhi 1977, p. 20.
170. 1973, p. 102 ff. and 1979, p. 332 ff.
171. Ralph. E.K., Michael H.N. and Han M., in Possehl, pp. 339-42, Table 4.
172. *Ibid.*, p. 339. One of the basic assumptions of C^{14} method, namely the constancy of the atmosphere inventory of C^{14}, O2, is not strictly valid. For various reasons it has fluctuated during past times. Also cf. Ward Anne, Adventures in Archaeology, London 1977, p. 15.
173. The contention of Indras (*op. cit.*, p. 52.) that the decay of the Sarasvatī had already set in before the advent of the Vedic people is unwarranted.
174. Manu Vaivasvata has been assigned to 4000 B.C. by Law N.N., (Age of the Ṛgveda, Calcutta 1965, p. 143) and to 3000 B.C. by Bhargava P.L., (India in the Vedic Age, Lucknow 1956, p. 133) and Pusalkar A.D., (The Vedic Age,

London 1951, p. 269) who calculated it to 3110 B.C. The date 3000 B.C. which closely approaches the traditional beginning of the Kali age in 3102 B.C. would appear to be more reasonable.

175. See Bharadwaj, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-7.

176. Prasher, R.N., The Subterranean Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi, Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. III, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1988, pp. 301-305.

177. Skanda, Prabhāsa, i. 35.21 and 24-26.

एवमुक्ता तदा तेन ब्रह्मणा च सरस्वती ।
हिमवन्तं गिरिं प्राप्य पिप्पलादाश्रमात्तदा ॥
तस्मात्स्थानात्ततो देवी प्रतीच्यभिमुखं ययौ ।
अन्तर्धानेन सा प्राप्ता केदारं हिममध्यगम् ॥
तत्संप्लाव्यगिरेः शृंगं केदारस्य पुरः स्थिता ॥
तेनाग्निना करस्थेन दह्यमाना सरस्वती ॥
भूमिं विदार्य तस्याधः प्रविष्टा गजगामिनी ॥
तदन्तर्धानमार्गेण प्रवृत्ता पश्चिमा मुखी ॥

3

THE ṚGVEDIC DṚṢADVATĪ

Two of the river names mentioned in the Ṛgveda appear to refer to one and the same river. One is Aśmanvatī and the other Dṛṣadvatī. Literally both names mean 'stony,' signifying a river 'full of stones' or 'bringing down lots of stones.' Aśmanvatī finds mention in Ṛgveda X.53.8:

अश्मन्वती रीयते सं रभध्वमुत्तिष्ठत प्र तरता सखायः ।
अत्रा जहाम ये असन्नशेवाः शिवान्वयमुत्तरेमाभि वाजान् ॥

Sāyaṇa[1] comments:

. . . अश्मन्वती नाम नदी रीयते गच्छति । . . ताम् यज्ञगमनाय उत्तरीतुम उत्तिष्ठत उद्गच्छत । तथा कृत्वा प्र तरत ताम् नदीमुल्लङ्घयत । हे सखायः यजमानस्य सखिभूता इति देवानां सम्बोधनम् । अत्र अस्यां नद्यां जहाम परित्यजाम । कानिति उच्यते । ये अशेवाः । शेवमिति सुखनाम । ये असुखभूताः असन् अभवन् अस्मान् आश्रित्य वर्तन्ते तान् जहाम । तथा कृत्वा शिवान् सुखकराणि वाजान् अन्नानि हवींषि अभिप्राप्तुम् उत्तरेम् ।

Griffith[2] translates: Here flows Aśmanvatī: hold fast each other, keep yourselves up, and pass, my friends, the river. There let us leave the powers that brought no profit, and cross the flood to powers that are auspicious.

Dṛṣadvatī appears in Ṛgveda III. 23.4:

नि त्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम् ।
दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि ॥

Griffith[3] translates: He set thee in the earth's most lovely station, in Ilāś place in days of fair bright weather. On Man, on Āpayā, Agni on the rivers Dṛṣadvatī, Sarasvatī, shine richly.

Griffith has erred in translating 'Mānuṣa' as 'Man.' Like Āpayā, Dṛṣadvatī and Sarasvatī Mānuṣa too is obviously one of the spots where the Bharata princes set the sacrificial fire.[3a] It has been rightly identified with the lake called Mānuṣa in later literature[4] and now represented by a huge reservoir of water eight/ten kms. to the west of Kaithal near the village which has adopted its name.[5]

M.L. Bhargava[6] is of the view that the Aśmanvatī cannot be identical with the Dṛṣadvatī since according to him in Ṛgveda X. 53.8, reproduced above, one side of the river is described as inauspicious and bringing no gains while the other is shown as the reverse of it, which is not the case with the Dṛṣadvatī. However, the commentary of Sāyaṇa and the translation of Griffith reproduced above do not warrant this inference.

Waters generally and of rivers particularly are considered purifying in Sanskrit Literature. In the Ṛgveda (VII. 49.1) they are specifically called 'Punānāḥ.' The river name Aśmanvatī also occurs in two mantras of the Atharvaveda (XII. 2.26-27) which are virtually reproductions of Ṛgveda X.53.8. The verses are taken as addressed to a group of persons who are wading through the river after performing a funeral ceremony.[7] The custom of taking a purifying bath after performing a funeral ceremony is prevalent among Hindus to this day. In this context the water of the river Aśmanvatī is apparently regarded as purifying in this mantra. As such there is no justification for the view that one bank of the river was inauspicious. However, while on one hand the mantra X.53.8 is prescribed for the performance of a funeral rite. on the other hand its recitation is enjoined at the performance of a rite connected with wedding.[7a] We accordingly take it that both the names Aśmanvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī refer to one and the same river which was known to bring down stones or to have a bed full of stones.

Scholars have held different views on the identification of the Dṛṣadvatī. Its equation with Ghaggar originally proposed by A.C. Das[8] was rejected long ago since the holiest part of Kurukṣetra comprised the tract bounded by the Sarasvatī in the north and the Dṛṣadvatī in the south.[9] The Ghaggar too lay in its north and has, as a matter of fact, been identified with the Sarasvatī.[10] Rapson[11] and many other scholars including N.L. Dey[12] and D.C. Sircar[13] identified the Dṛṣadvatī with the Chautang Nala. This view has to be discarded for the simple reason that the Chautang had no defined course and it ran through the middle of the holy region of Brahmāvarta.[14] Another stream called Rakshi was favoured by Cunningham[15] but it is too insignificant to represent the Vedic Dṛṣadvatī. Like the Chautang it is a rainy season torrent having a course which is known only for a small stretch.

Uday Vir Shastri[16] believes that the Dṛṣadvatī was identical with the Gaṅgā because some passages in the Mahābhārata place the city of Hastināpura quite close to it and the Purāṇas speak of a confluence of the two rivers. It is, however, quite probable that there was another and older city named Hastināpura near the Dṛṣadvatī and the name travelled to its present site on the Gaṅgā much later.[17] As to the mention of a confluence of the Dṛṣadvatī and the Gaṅgā no significance can be attached to it since the name Gaṅgā was later given to many small streams. For example in Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa[18] we find Bharata crossing the combined stream of the Sarasvatī and the Gaṅgā before reaching the Yamunā on his way from Rājagṛha in Kekaya country to Ayodhyā. One Gaṅgā Mandākinī is mentioned in the Vāmana Purāṇa[19] as a river of Kurukṣetra. A small stream bearing the name Gaṅgā was thus already in existence in the region of Kurukṣetra before the composition of Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa. In any case there is absolutely no indication in literature that Gaṅgā was ever flowing westward through the land of Kurukṣetra. This consideration also rules out the suggestion of an equation of the Dṛṣadvatī and the Yamunā[20] which too flows eastward like the Gaṅgā and joins it at Prayāga.

This leaves us with the identification of the Dṛṣadvatī with the old river bed in which now the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal flows. The suggestion was first made by M.L. Bharagava[21] in a somewhat incomplete and one-sided note. It deserves a more detailed and systematic examination which we propose to undertake here.

The account of the long Sārasvata and Dārṣadvata sacrificial sessions in the Brāhmaṇas and Śrauta-sūtras[22] gives us a very helpful description of the course of the Vedic Dṛṣadvatī. To put it briefly[23] anyone undertaking a Sārasvata sacrificial session got initiated at Vinaśana or the region where the Sarasvatī disappeared in the sands of Bikaner. This region has been placed about Kalibangan.[24] He then moved upstream along the eastern bank of the Sarasvatī reaching the point of its confluence with the Dṛṣadvatī which he crossed to regain the eastern bank of the Sarasvatī and proceed further. For the Dārṣadvata sacrificial session he was required to consecrate his fires near the confluence at Pariṇah before resuming his advance upstream along the eastern bank of the Dṛṣadvatī. The session was ultimately to be terminated after a lustral bath in the Yamunā at Triplakṣa or Triplakṣāvaharaṇa. According to the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[25] Pariṇah was the name of a lake in the lower half of Kurukṣetra while the Lāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra[26] takes it to represent 'risen ground' भूमेरुन्नतप्रदेशः. The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[27] and the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra[28] appear to support the second view which is obviously more acceptable.

We have shown elsewhere[29] that the courses of the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī joined near village Malkebhowri, a few kms. above Kalibangan. On the

other hand the requirement of a lustral bath at Triplakṣāvaharaṇa on the Yamunā for terminating the Dārṣadvata sacrificial session performed upstream along the Dṛṣadvatī suggests that in its upper reaches the course of this river lay quite close to the Yamunā. We have thus a fairly clear idea of the upper and lower ends of the Dṛṣadvatī as well as the point of its confluence with the Sarasvatī as known in the age of the Brāhmaṇas and Śrauta Sūtras. Between these points, the course of the river can be verified with the help of a number of known Vedic and pre-historic sites.

As we shall see these considerations are fully satisfied by the course followed by the Hansi-Hisar branch of the present Western Jumna Canal.

According to the Gazetteers the Western Jumna Canal is by far the oldest of the great canals in the Province, and originated in 1356, when Feroz Shah Tughlak utilized the torrent bed now known as the Chautang to conduct water to the royal gardens at Hansi and Hisar. This was little more than a Monsoon supply channel, and after about a hundred years water ceased to flow farther than the lands of Kaithal. In 1568 the Emperor Akbar re-excavated the work of Feroz Shah and brought a supply from the Yamunā and the Somb into the Chautang and so on to Hansi and Hissar. This was undoubtedly a perennial canal, as is testified by the ancient bridges at Karnal and Safidon and the complete set of water-courses with which the Canal was provided besides the original Sanad or working plan of the Canal which is still in existence and promises a supply of water all the year round...The head of the Canal is at Tajewala in Ambala District 30° 17′ N and 77° 37′ E about 1½ miles from the point where the river (Yamunā) emerges from the lower hills. The river is here crossed by a weir 1700 feet in length, flanked at each end by a scouring sluice and head regulator for the Eastern Jumna Canal on the left bank and for the Western Jumna Canal on the right, the full capacities authorized being respectively 1300 and 6380 cubic feet per second. The Western Jumna Canal has thus a maximum discharge, more than three times that of the average flow of the Thames at Teddington. For the first 14 miles of its course the Canal runs almost entirely in the old West branch of the Yamunā river. It then effects junction with Somb river, a masonry dam across which holds up the combined streams and forces them into the Canal head at Dadupur.[30] From Dadupur the Canal flows south in an artificial channel to Buria below which it again takes to an old river bed. The Yamunā flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. when Ahmadshah forced the passage of the stream at this point in the teeth of a Maratha army.[31]

It enters Karnal district about 25 miles north-east of Karnal and flows to a point 4 miles below Karnal where the Grand Trunk Road crosses it by an old Mughal (Badshahi) bridge. From this point it holds a south-west course for some 18 miles till the Hansi branch strikes off westwards from village Munak[32] and

entering the Jind Tehsil at village Auta and following the bed of old Chautang it flows on via Safidon and Jind[33] to Hansi and Hisar to be finally swallowed up in the sands of the Bikaner desert.[34]

The main points that emerge from this account of the Gazetteers are as follows:

(i) Barring a small strip between Dadupur and Buria in district Ambala the Western Jumna Canal flows in old beds right from its source at Tajewala to its end in Hisar.

(ii) Feroz Shah Tughlak utilized the torrent bed now known as the Chautang for his canal.

(iii) The Yamunā flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. and for the first 14 miles of its course the Canal runs almost entirely in the old West branch of the Yamunā river.

Before examining these points it would be worthwhile to refer to the accounts left by early Muslim historians at least five of which can be cited here.

According to Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi[35] of Shams-i-Siraj Afif a contemporary of Feroz Shah Tughlak, the king built a town and fort in the neighbourhood of the village of great Laras and named it Hisar-Firozah and to meet the scarcity of water conducted into it two streams one from the river Yamunā called Rajiwah and the other from Sutlej called Alaghkhani.[36] Both these streams were conducted through the vicinity of Karnal, and, after a length of about 80 kos, discharged their waters by one channel into the town.

In his Tarikh-i-Mubarkshahi,[37] Yahya Bin Ahmad (first half of the fifteenth century) records that "in the following year (757 A.D. 1356) he (Sultan Ferozshah) brought the stream of Ferozabad from the mountains of Mandati (Sic) and Sirmor and having thrown into it 7 distinct streams he conducted it to Hansi. From thence he led it to Aramana, and there he built a strong fort, which he called Hisar Firozah. Below the palace he dug an extensive tank, and filled it with the waters of the canal. He brought another canal from the river Yamunā, and threw it into the tank of that city, from whence he carried it on farther." Yahya Bin Ahmad, it may be noted, belonged to Sarhind and had access to all the information supplied by earlier historians. He was therefore better placed to have first hand knowledge of the canals of Firoz Shah and their geographical position[38] and is rightly considered to be more adequate and precise.[39]

Following Yahya Bin Ahmad closely Firishta (a contemporary of Akbar) in his Tarikh[40] says that "in the year 757 he (Feroz) constructed another canal between the hills of Mundir and Surmore from the Yamunā into which he led seven other streams, which all uniting, ran in one channel through Hansy (Hansi)

and from thence to *Raiseen* (Absin) where he built a strong fort which he called Hissar Feroz...At the same time he introduced another canal from the Yamunā, which filled a large lake he caused to be constructed at Hissar Feroz."

Abdul Kadir Badaoni, yet another contemporary of Akbar, notes in his Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh[41] that in 757 (1356 A.D.) Feroz Shah Tughlaq opened a canal from the territory of Mandu and Sirmur and connected seven other *nehrs* or streams with it and conducted the waters to Hansi and thence to Rasin; and there the Feroz Hisar or fortress was founded. Beneath the Kasr or palace or castle, a hauz or reservoir was constructed, and filled with water from the canal in question.

Finally referring to this event Inayat Khan (a protege of Shah Jehan) in his Shah-Jahan-Nama[42] says that "the canal that Sultan Feroz Shah Khilji (Sic), during the time he reigned at Delhi, had made to branch off from the river Yamunā, in the vicinity of Pargana Khizrabad, whence he brought in a channel 30 imperial kos long to the confines of Pargana Safidun. which was his hunting seat, and had only a scanty supply of water, had, after the Sultan's death, become in the course of time, ruinous."

These accounts of five Muslim Historians, one of whom was a contemporary of Feroz Shah Tughlaq, do not support the conclusions presented by the Gazetteers. On the other hand they almost unanimously testify to the construction of a canal by Feroz Shah from the Yamunā to Hansi and Hisar. There is mention of another canal too but the most interesting fact to which at least three of them refer is the diversion of the waters of seven other streams into the canal constructed from the Yamunā. There is no mention in these historical accounts of the utilization of any old bed by Feroz Shah Tughlaq between Tajewala and Dadupur not to speak of any specific mention of the Chautang in this connection. Nor do they make any reference to any canal emerging from the river Chautang.[43] And, as a matter of fact, they do not contain even an indirect hint about the existence of any old West branch of river Yamunā. On the contrary the Chautang is supposed to have joined the Feroz Shah Canal much later to the west of Safidon.[44]

Now if we have to make a choice between the accounts available in the Gazetteers and works of early Muslim Historians, we shall have to opt in favour of Muslim Historians without any hesitation. It has been repeatedly realised that in the matter of presentation of historical facts the Gazetteers are often not quite reliable. More than 90 years ago Major H.G. Raverty[45] was compelled to remark that it was a pity the Punjab Government had not someone to correct the historical part of its Gazetteers. In the present case, we find the statement that the Yamunā flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. entirely unwarranted. The Gazetteer erroneously states that Ahmad Shah forced the passage of the stream at this point in the teeth of a Maratha army. The fact is that Ahmad Shah had forded the

Yamunā at the crossing named Buria Ghat and not at the point of Buria town proper. This point of crossing on the Yamunā was called Buria Ghat because it lay on the road from the town of Buria near Jagadhari to Saharanpur on the other side of the river. The existence of such a route is evident from the fact that there is a Mohalla named Buria Darwaza in the western part of Saharanpur.[46] To this may be added the fact that there is no mention in literature of the river Yamunā or its branch flowing westward through the territory of the present state of Haryana at any time.

Muslim Historians are also right in saying that Feroz Shah conducted seven other streams into his Jumna Canal. As described above the Western Jumna Canal is joined by the combined stream of the torrents Somb and Pathrala at Dadupur where through a level-crossing their combined waters pass over to the Yamunā unless the low level of the flow in the Canal requires their diversion into it. Rising in the Shiwaliks to the north of Jagadhri, the Somb enters the plains at Ad Badri and is joined by more than half a dozen small tributaries before meeting the Pathrala a short distance above Dadupur. According to a forwarding note dated 3rd April 1917 of Mr. G.C. Laurie,[47] Superintending Engineer, Western Jumna Canal, the combined stream carried a sizeable supply of water which could amount to 1,15,000 cusecs against about 3,50,000 cusecs of the Yamunā during floods. It rose with great rapidity and without warning on account of which the control of the supply was frequently quite out of hand. Mr. Laurie describes the efforts repeatedly made at torrent-training of the Upper Somb. He mentions about a dozen survey plans prepared and executed between the years 1854 to 1910 to train and keep the Upper Somb into a straight line with a better angle of approach to a dam on the Pathrala. This suggests that the Somb was originally not flowing exactly in the same course which it occupies now. There is an indication in the report of Mr. Laurie that the Western Jumna Canal at one time joined the Pathrala channel before its confluence with the Somb.

In another report written in 1832 Col. J. Colvin[48] remarks that probability and tradition point out the head of the original canal to have been where it is now, immediately at the point where the Yamunā issues from the lower range of hills. But he too falls into the mistake committed by the Gazetteers in conjecturing that it was then conducted along one of the many old water courses of the Yamunā till it fell into what was then the mouth of the Somb river. Colvin adds that the water was conveyed into another old channel of the Yamunā under Buria, being a wide hollow, skirting the high ground to its north and west which is continuous, though with numerous and deep indentations from the hills along the right bank of the Somb river and then following this water course as far as Karnal. Colvin cites Major W.E. Baker to say that the Somb was a mountain torrent nearly dry, except in the rains when it received the drainage of the mountains south-east of Nahan

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and of the plains east of its course nearly to the Yamunā. Abetted by a strong fall, its floods were then most violent and sudden in their effects.

If the Somb attracted many tributaries from the east and an old river bed, as suggested by Colvin existed from the hills along its right bank it must belong to the Somb itself or its sister stream Pathrala. It is physiographically impossible to relate this old bed to the Yamunā which has its source far away from Ad Badri to the East in the higher Himalayas. The courses of the Somb and the Yamunā run almost at 90° to each other.

Mr. Laurie[49] also reports that at one stage the abandonment of the head-works of the Western Jumna Canal at Tajewala had been under serious consideration and the suggested alternatives included construction of a new head-works at Jatlana or Gumthala, lower down the river, or construction of a new high level canal from a point some miles below Tajewala. Such a suggestion would have been entirely out of question if a branch of the Yamunā had actually ever flowed from Tajewala westward through Haryana and provided a naturally convenient bed for the Canal.

Evidently the course of the Somb has been diverted, towards the Yamunā as a result of the numerous attempts made over long periods to tame it. There can be no dispute with the statement in the Gazetteers that the Western Jumna Canal occupies an old river course from Buria right up to its end. Most of the maps, old as well as those prepared by the Survey of India, mark an old dried up river-bed from the tale-end of the Western Jumna Canal till it joins the Ghaggar before vanishing in the deserts of Bikaner.

This position is fully supported by literary evidence. We have already shown in the beginning that the Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī was a sister river of the Sarasvatī with which it is named in the Ṛgveda and which it joined before Vinaśana according to Brāhmaṇas and later literature. Although undoubtedly a perennial river in Vedic times it appears to have suffered the same fate which befell Sarasvatī, the most important Ṛgvedic river, in the great catastrophe described in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[50] as the Deluge of the time of Manu Vaivasvata. In another article[51] we have examined literary and archaeological evidence to establish the plausibility of the occurrence of this Deluge about three thousand years B.C. We have also shown there that this seismic-tectonic-volcanic upheaval, supported by archaeological and literary evidence, brought extensive changes in the topography of the Shiwalik belt between the Yamunā and Ravi resulting in the diversion of the waters of the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī and destruction of many pre-Harappan settlements including the one at Kalibangan. The event involved large scale earth-movements covering a very wide region including the Indus Valley and the country further north-east to the Shimla foot hills across the Thar and the Indo-Gangetic divide.

It would be worthwhile to draw attention to two episodes which are relevant for our purpose here. One concerns the destruction of the mountain named Krauñca while the other relates to the birth of the rivers Sarasvatī and Sāmbhramatī. The Mahābhārata[52] states that god Skanda was appointed as commander of the army of the gods on the bank of the river Sarasvatī to destroy the Demons. One of the Demon chiefs Bāṇa, son of Bali, took shelter on Krauñca Mountain and troubled gods. Skanda Kārttikeya then smote the Krauñca with a missile given to him by Agni. From the fact that the event took place on the mountains near the Sarasvatī, it would appear that it occurred in the Shiwaliks about Nahan or near-by which is the region of the source of the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī. The involvement of Agni would suggest a volcanic upheaval. According to the other story related in the Skanda Purāṇa,[53] the waters of the Sarasvatī were once converted into blood as a result of a curse of sage Viśvāmitra and it attracted Rākṣasas and Piśācas. Sage Vasiṣṭha then meditated at its source near the Plakṣa tree concentrating on the ground with a mantra addressed to god Varuṇa. As a result, water gushed forth from two holes in the ground one of which gave birth to the Sarasvatī and the other to the Sāmbhramatī so named as it was born as a result of the agitation in the mind of the sage. We suspect that the name Sāmbhramatī is an instance of reSanskritisation of the name Somb in the medieval period. The implication is that the present hill torrent of Somb is the much reduced Aśmanvatī of the Ṛgveda. The old river suffered a diversion of a large portion of its waters towards the Yamunā on account of serious changes in the topography of the Shiwaliks during the great Deluge.

This finds support even from prevailing physiographical position in the area. On the other side of the Shiwalik ridge where the Somb now takes its rise we find two streams called Ashmi and Assan joining together and soon meeting the Giri to flow eastward into the Yamunā.[54] The terrain suggests that but for the dividing ridge created in the Deluge their combined waters would have come down through the Somb and followed the old bed utilized for the Western Jumna Canal. This is only a reconstruction of what in all probability was the situation before the occurrence of the great Deluge.

Just like the name Somb the names Ashmi and Assan also immediately remind us of the Aśmanvatī. Linguistically the evolution of Aśmanvatī into Ashmi-Assan and Somb is as smooth and natural as the reSanskritisation of Somb into Sāmbhramatī. Aśmanvatī occurs only once in the Ṛgveda and twice in the Atharvaveda as already noted and thereafter it is replaced by its synonym Dṛṣadvatī all along in Vedic as well as post Vedic literature. Apparently it lived on in oral tradition and evolved into forms like Ashmi, Assan and Somb during the ages. When Somb found its way into literature in the medieval age its Apabhraṣṭa form was reSanskritised into Sāmbhramatī since its nexus with Aśmanvatī had been lost.[55] The characteristic of bringing down stones was so strikingly pronounced in

its case that even the prevailing vernacular name of its sister stream Pathrala means 'Stony' like Aśmanvatī and Dṛṣadvatī. The present Somb and Pathrala are twin streams like the Ashmi and Assan.

One more factor still remains to be satisfied. If, as we have tried to show, the bed now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal below the Dadupur head-works belongs to the Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī we should expect to find a number of Vedic and pre-historic sites along this course. In this respect also we receive full support from literary and archaeological sources. Known for its turbulence and fury from the earliest times the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar appears to have obliterated all traces of most of the pre-historic settlements that fell within the reach of its unrestrained flood waters. Comparatively, the Dṛṣadvatī has spared a much more impressive group of ancient sites like Srughna, Āsandīvat, Rakhigarhi, Mitathal, Siswal, Kārotī, Sherpura, Sothi and Nohar.

Of these Srughna, represented by a small village now called Sugh, lies 30° 9′N and 77° 23′ E on the right bank of the river about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhri, Yugandhara of Sanskrit Literature. It is first mentioned as the name of a province in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[56] where it has been apparently misspelt as Tūrghna, and described as the northern half of the land of Kurukṣetra. The road from Mathura to this town has been called Sraughna.[57] It is also noted by Varāhamihira[58] and by Buddhist works like Mahāmāyūrī[59] and Divyāvadāna[60] and described in some detail by Hieun Tsang.[61] Archaeological excavations at the site on a modest scale[62] have yielded Painted Grey Ware shirds dateable to circa 600-500 B.C. although the site is undoubtedly much older. Āsandīvat identified with the present town of Asandh,[63] lies about 32 kms. south-west of Karnal at a distance from the right bank of the river. It finds mention in the Aitareya[64] and Śatapatha[65] Brāhmaṇas as the capital of Janamejaya Pārikṣita and the venue of his Aśvamedha sacrifice. It is also noticed in Sūtra literature[66] apart from grammatical works of Pāṇini and others. Archaeologically the site has not been properly probed but Painted Grey Ware is available and there is a Buddhist Stūpa of the Kuṣāṇa period. Rakhigarhi, also known as Rakhi Shahpur, lying 29° 60′ N by 76° 10′ E in Hansi tehsil of district Hisar, again on the right side of the river, is supposed to be the most extensive known Harappan site in India and deemed worthy of being considered as a possible eastern-most capital of the Harrapans.[67]

The remaining sites fall on the left bank of the river. At Mitathal, lying 28°. 50′ N by 76° 10′ E, about 10 kms. to the north-west of the district town of Bhiwani, excavations revealed the existence of a culture related to pre-Harappan phase of Kalibangan and elements of Harappan and late Harappan phases.[68] The cultural assemblage at Siswal, situated 29°. 10′ N by 75° 30′ E, about 26 kms. to the west of the district headquarters of Hisar, has thrown up evidence of co-existence of the pre-Harappans and Harappans.[69] Kārotī is a Vedic town of

undoubted antiquity and appears in the age of the Brāhmaṇas as a seat of the fire cult par excellence.[70] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[71] describes it as the place where sage Tura Kāvaṣeya made a fire altar for the gods. Situated 29° 10'N by 74° 50' E it has been explored to reveal pre-Harappan and Harappan remains.[72] Sherpura lies 7 kms. north-east of Bhadra and is exclusively a pre-Harappan settlement.[73] The well known site of Sothi, 8 kms. east of Nohar, is predominantly pre-Harappan although Harappan material was also noticed towards the top of the mound.[74] Likewise Nohar itself has yielded pre-Harappan antiquities as well as a Harappan culture complex.[75]

We restrict ourselves to Vedic and pre-historic sites in view of the fact that although formally described as a Mahānadī[76] the Dṛṣadvatī had already been reduced to a rainy season torrent by the time of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas.[77] The existence of these important sites along the bed in which the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal now flows provides the final proof of the fact that it was in reality the course followed by the Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī.[78] And of course it fully satisfies the description of the river as available in the details of the Dārṣadvata sacrificial sessions given in the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra literature. This identification thus stands the test of historical, geographical and linguistic considerations.

The conclusion is that between the Tajewala and Dadupur head-works the Western Jumna Canal flows in the channel initially got constructed by Firoz Shah Tughlaq during the later half of the 14th century from the Yamunā and thereafter it follows the bed which originally belonged to the Vedic Aśmanvatī—Dṛṣadvatī or the present Somb. In its upper reaches this bed is quite close to the Yamunā while at the lower end it merges in the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar after running along a string of well known Vedic and pre-historic sites. It was joined by the Chautang, which might be the Vedic Āpayā much later in its course, to the west of Safidon.

Notes and References

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2. Hymns of the Ṛgveda, Eng. Tr., 2 Volumes, Banaras 1920.
3. *Ibid.*

3a. Cf. Ram Gopal, A New Interpretation of the Vedic Word Mānuṣa, The Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Vol. XVII, Pts. 3-4, pp. 193-202.

4. See e.g. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81. 53-54 and Vāmana P., Cr. ed. Varanasi 1967, 14. 50-56.
5. Bhargava, M.L., The Geography of Ṛgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 30 f.

6. *Op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.
7. Griffith R.T.H., Hymns of the Atharvaveda, Eng. tr., 2 Vols., 2nd ed. Banaras 1916, Vol. II, p. 106 note to xii.2.26.

7a. Ram Gopal, The History and Principles of Vedic Interpretation, New Delhi, p. 26 f.

8. Ṛgvedic India, 3rd ed. Delhi 1971, p. 68.
9. Mbh. Vana, 81.175:

दक्षिणन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दृषद्वतोम् ।
ये वसन्ति कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे ॥

10. This identification has now gained general acceptance. See e.g. Spate O.H.K. and others, India, Pakistan and Ceylon: The Regions, 3rd ed. London 1972, p. 536. For fresh material confirming this identification see Bharadwaj, O.P., Gaṅgā to Ghaggar with Vālmiki, Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal, Vol. XVII, 1979, pp. 142-167. Also on Vedic Sarasvati or Ghaggar as a great Himalayan river and Dṛṣadvati its major Himalayan tributary, see Bimal Ghose, Amar Kar and Zahid Hussain, Comparative Role of the Aravalli and the Himalayan River Systems in the Fluvial Sedimentation of the Rajasthan Desert, Man and Environment, Vol. IV, 1980, pp. 8-11.
11. Ancient India, Cambridge 1914, p. 51.
12. The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, 3rd ed. Delhi 1971, p. 57 f.
13. Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature, Calcutta 1967, p. 24.
14. Cf. Bhargava, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
15. Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vol. XIV, Reprint, Varanasi 1970, p. 87 f.
16. सांख्यदर्शन का इतिहास, Ghaziabad 1979, pp. 82-90.
17. Cf. Arun Kumar, On the location of Hastināpura, Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda, Vol. XXXIII, Nos. 1-2, Sept.-Dec. 1983, pp. 89-107.
18. Cr. ed. Vol. II, ed. Vaidya, P.L., Oriental Institute, Baroda 1962, Ayodhyā, 65.5:

सरस्वतीं च गङ्गां च युग्मेन प्रतिपद्य च ।
उत्तरे वारमत्स्यानां भारुण्डं प्राविशद्वनम् ॥

19. Sm., 13.7:

आपगा च महापुण्या गङ्गा मन्दाकिनी नदी ।
मधुस्रवा वासुनदी कौशिकी पापनाशिनो ॥

20. Suraj Bhan (Archaeological Evidences of the Changes in the course of Yamuna in Sub-recent Times, Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Jan-Dec.

1970, pp. 1-3) following "a host of geologists and geographers" subscribes to the views that the Yamuna flowed to the west through Haryana in Sub-recent times. Silak Ram Phogat (A note on the old course of the Yamuna, J.H.S. Vol. III, No. 2, July 1971, pp. 9-10) supports him but thinks that below Safidon the Yamuna assumed a quite different westerly course and was joined by the Dṛṣadvatī-Chautang.

21. *Op. cit.*, p. 53 ff.
22. Macdonell A.A., Keith A.B., Vedic Index, 2 Vols, Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. 1, p. 374.
23. To quote from 'Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, ed. with the commentary of Varadattasuta Ānarttya and Govinda, Alfred Hillebrandt, 2 Vols., Reprint, Delhi 1981:

 XIII. 29.1 : सरस्वत्या विनशने दीक्षा सारस्वतानाम् । . . .
 XIII. 29.11 : प्रतीपं पूर्वेण पक्षसा यन्ति । . . .
 XIII. 29.14 : अप्यये दृषद्वत्याः । . . .
 XIII. 29.27 : संवत्सरं ब्राह्मणस्य गा रक्षेत् ।
 XIII. 29.28 : संवत्सरं व्यर्णे नैतन्धवेऽग्निमिन्धीत ।
 XIII. 29.29 : संवत्सरे परीणह्यग्नीनाधाय दृषद्वत्या दक्षिणेन तीरेणाग्नेयेनाष्टाकपालेन शम्यापरासे शम्यापरासे यजमान एति ।
 XIII. 29.30 : त्रिः प्लक्षां प्रति यमुनामवभृथमभ्यवयन्ति ।
 XIII. 29 31 : इति दार्षद्वतम् ।

24. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, pp. 20-43.
25. Ed. Raghuvira, Nagpura 1954, ii. 300:

 तेषाम् उ तेषां परीणदिति कुरुक्षेत्रस्य जघनार्धे
 सरस्कन्दन्तं दीक्षायै ते प्राञ्चो यन्ति समया कुरुक्षेत्रम् । . . .

26. X. 19.1:

 संवत्सरादूर्ध्वं परीणं नाम स्थली कुरुक्षेत्रे तस्यामग्नीनाधाय ।

 Says the Commentator:

 परीणहीति देशश्रुतिः परीणम् नाम स्थली कुरुक्षेत्रे भूमेरुन्नतप्रदेशः तस्यां स्थल्याम् अग्नीनाधाय ।

27. Ed. Shastri and Rangacharya, Reprint, Delhi 1985, VIII. 1.1:

 तेषां कुरुक्षेत्र वेदिरासीत् । तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्धं आसीत् तूघ्नंमुत्तरार्धः । परीणज्जघनार्धः । मरव उत्करः ।

28. XXIV. 6.32:

 कुरुक्षेत्रे परिणहिस्थलेऽन्याधेयमन्वारम्भणीयान्तं भवति । . . .

29. Studies, p. 24.
30. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Calcutta 1908, Vol. 1, pp. 202-204.
31. Punjab District Gazetteers, Vol. vii, prt. A., Ambala District 1923-24, Lahore 1925, p. 12.
32. Gazetteer of the Karnal District, Lahore 1892, pp. 9-10.
33. Punjab States Gazetteers, Vol. XVII A., Phulkian States, Patiala Jind and Nabha, Lahore 1909, p. 274.
34. Gazetteer of the Hissar District, Lahore 1893, p. 12.
35. The History of India as told by its own Historians, Elliot and Dowson, 8 Vols., Reprint, Allahabad 1964, Vol. III, pp. 298-300.
36. Alagh Khani or Ulugh Khani was named after Ulugh Khan cousin of Firoz and Rajiwah or Rajiba after Salar Rajab father of the Sultan. See Hodivala S.H., Studies in Indo Muslim History, Bombay 1939, p. 314.
37. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 8.
38. Jauhri R.C., Feroz Tughlaq, Agra 1968, p. 105.
39. Banerjee J.M., History of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, Delhi 1967, p. 147, n. 26.
40. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, pp. 225-226.
41. Quoted by Raverty H.G., The Mihran of Sind and its Tributaries, J.A.S.B. Vol. LXI, Pt. 1, No. III, 1892, p. 269.
42. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, pp. 225-226.
43. Cf. Banerjee, *Op. cit.*, p. 148. n. 34.
44. Habib Irfan, An Atlas of the Mughal Empire, Delhi 1982, map 4 B and note at p. 11-12.
45. *Op. cit.*, p. 264.
46. Gupta Hari Ram, Marathas and Panipat, Chandigarh 1961, p. 317.
47. Courtesy Muztar Balkrishan, Rajmahal Estate, Kurukshetra.
48. Quoted by Kanwar H.I.S., Ali Mardan Khan, Islamic Culture, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, April 1974, pp. 105-119, p. 111.
49. Forwarding Note, p. 30.
50. i. 8.1.
51. Studies, pp. 20-43. Archaeologists now accept tectonic upheavals as the cause of decline of Harappan civilisation. See the Russian journal Znaniye Sila, 1985, cited in MLBD Newsletter Sept. 1986, p. 8.
52. Śalya, 43. 50-52 and 45. 71-73.
53. Nāgara Khaṇḍa, 173. 9-14.
54. See the relevant Survey of India 1" sheet.
55. On restoration or re-Sanskritisation of geographical names, see Bharadwaj O.P., Studies, pp. 176-191.
56. See N. 27 supra.
57. Vasu S.C., The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini, 2 Vols., Reprint, Delhi 1977, Vol. 1, p. 778.

58. XIV. 21.
59. ii. 23.60.
60. Ed. Vaidya P.L., Darbhanga 1959, p. 47.
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63. V.I.J. Vol. iii, pt. ii (Sept. 1965), pp. 278-281.
64. viii. 21.
65. xiii. 5.4.2.
66. e.g. Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, XVI, 8. 27-28, 9.1.
67. Suraj Bhan, Excavation at Mitathal (1968) And Other Explorations in the Sutlej-Yamuna Divide, Kurukshetra 1975, p. 95.
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69. Suraj Bhan, Excavation at Mitathal, pp. 111-115 and Dikshit, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.
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 अथ ह स्माह शाण्डिल्यः । तुरो ह कावषेयः कारोत्यां देवेभ्योऽग्निं चिकाय ।

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73. Dikshit, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
76. Bhagavata P., Gita Press ed. V. 19.18.
77. Nāradīya P., Ed. Charudev Shastri, Delhi 1984, Uttara 65.8(ii) and 9(i):

 दृषद्वती कौशिकी च पुण्या हैरण्वतो नदी ।
 वर्षाकालवहाश्चैता वर्जयित्वा सरस्वतीम् ॥

78. See map.

4

THE KURUS AND KURUKṢETRA IN THE UPANIṢADS

Indian tradition regards the land of Kurukṣetra as the Seat of Creation and the Cradle of Indian Civilization. According to the Vāmana Purāṇa[1] the Sannihatı lake in Thanesar is the spot where the Golden Cosmic Egg took form resulting ultimately in the creation of the worlds. The holy tīrtha of Pṛthūdaka, now known as Pehowa, is mentioned in the Mahābhārata[2] and the Vāmana Purāṇa[3] as the venue of creation of the worlds and the four Varṇas. At another place the Bhāgavata Purāṇa[4] describes Prajāpati Kardama as undertaking austerities on the Sarasvatı when Brahmā asked him to take ūp the creation of the worlds.

The fabric of Indian mythology is woven around gods most of whom are associated with Kurukṣetra in one way or the other. Manu[5] gives the name of Brahmāvarta to the heartland of Kurukṣetra comprising the doab of the holy rivers Sarasvatī and the Dṛsadvatı and the oldest Vedic works place the earliest religious and political activities in this region. It is generally agreed that the bulk of Vedic literature was composed here.[6] This is the land of the Bharatas who are regarded as the greatest among the peoples of ancient India.[7]

Naturally there are many references in early Sanskrit Literature relating to the history and culture of Kurukṣetra and its people. Even a precise geographical definition of Kurukṣetra is provided to us first in a late Vedic work, the Taittirıya Āraṇyaka[8] where it is described as a sacrificial altar of gods. Of this Vedı of Kurukṣetra Khāṇḍava and Tūrghna respectively formed the southern and northern halves. Pariṇat was the lower half and the Marus the Utkara or the rubbish heap. Here Khāṇḍava signifies not any particular place but the whole region of Khāṇḍava

(well-known as the Khāṇḍava forest) which was much bigger than the present district of Delhi and Tûrghna, undoubtedly a scribal error for Srughna,[9] denotes the region around Jagadhari (Skt. Yugandhara) with its headquarters at the present village of Sugh situated on the Western Yamunā Canal at a distance of about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhari town in the district of Yamuna Nagar. The ancient district of Srughna extended into the neighbouring hilly areas of the Shiwalik range. The name Pariṇat applied to the region around the lower part of the Sarasvatı and Dṛṣadvatī doab touching their confluence[10] while the sandy areas of Rajasthan beyond this point comprised the rubbish heap of this sacrificial altar. It would thus appear that ancient Kurukṣetra would be coterminus with the present state of Haryana if the districts of Delhi and Meerut, areas between the Ghaggar and Sutlej and some areas of Hanumangarh and Nohar near Kārotı, which is men tioned in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,[11] were added to it.

This region of Kurukṣetra can be roughly described as Kurubhūmi also even though much later Utpala, the commentator of Bṛhatsaṁhitā restricts the name to the region around Thanesar.[12] Kuru proper is also taken to include the region between the Gaṅgā and Yamunā with Hastināpura near Meerut as its capital.[13] The tract between the Sarasvatī and Yamunā was specifically known as Kuru-Jāṅgala[14] while that to the north of Srughna was called the Uttara-Kurus.[15]

The age of the Upaniṣads synchronises with the end of the Vedic period.[16] The older ones, often along with their respective Āraṇyakas actually form the constitutents of the Brāhmaṇas. Therefore, they are rightly known as Vedānta, i.e. "the end of the Veda."[17] In fact, in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[18], the Upaniṣad is described as "the essence of the Veda". Two of the Upaniṣads namely the Śiva-Saṁkalpa and the Īśa form parts respectively of the thirty fourth and the fortieth books of the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā. The Aitareya along with its Āraṇyaka belongs to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, and the Kauṣitakī along with its Araṇyaka to the Kauṣıtakı Brāhmaṇa. These two Brāhmaṇas belong to the Ṛgveda. The Taittirıya Upaniṣad along with its Āraṇyaka is a part of the Taittirıya Brāhmaṇa which belongs to the Taittirıya Saṁhitā of the Yajurveda. So does the Mahānārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka forms a part, along with its Āraṇyaka, of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā. The Chāndogya, having its first section as an Āraṇyaka is supposed to belong to the Tāṇḍya-Mahābrāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda while the Kena originally belongs to the Brāhmaṇa contents of the Jaiminıya or the Talavakāra, school of the Sāmaveda. Thus the Aitareya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya, Taittirıya, Kauṣītakı, Kena, Śivasaṁkalpa and Īśa represent the earliest works of their class. Of the remaining texts some like the Jābāla could be placed before the beginning of the Christian era and the rest assigned to later dates.[19] In all about two hundred Upaniṣadic texts are now available. A collection brought out by the Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay in 1917 contained one hundred and twelve Upaniṣads and one published by M/s Motilal

Banarsidass from Delhi in 1970 (followed with a second edition in 1980) contains one hundred and eighty eight.

The composition of the earlier Upaniṣads is generally placed between 700 B.C. to 600 B.C. although some of their contents would appear to indicate a much earlier date.[20] We shall try to present here all those extracts from these texts which refer to the land or people of the Kurus or Kurukṣetra. Each extract will be followed by a brief elucidation of the reference involved.[21]

1. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*

iii. 1.1:

> जनको ह वैदेहो बहुदक्षिणेन यज्ञेनेजे तत्र ह कुरुपञ्चालानां ब्राह्मणा अभिसमेता बभूवुस्तस्य ह जनकस्य वैदेहस्य विजिज्ञासा बभूव कः स्विदेषां ब्राह्मणानामनूचानतम इति स ह गवां सहस्रमवरुरोध दश दश पादा एकैकस्याः शृङ्गयोराबद्धा बभूवुः ।

Among the Brāhmaṇas, assembled at a sacrifice performed by Janaka, king of Videha, offering rich sacrificial rewards and accompanied by a philosophical discussion promising a thousand cows with ten Pādas (quarter coins of Gold) tied to their horns the presence of the Brāhmaṇas from the region of Kurus and Pañcālas is specially noted, undoubtedly because they were held in great esteem for their learning, philosophical wisdom and debating skill.

iii. 3.1:

> अथ हैनं भुज्युर्लाह्यायनिः पप्रच्छ याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच मद्रेषु चरकाः पर्यव्रजाम ते पतञ्चलस्य काप्यस्य गृहानैम तस्यासीद्दुहिता गन्धर्वगृहीता तमपृच्छाम कोऽसीति सोऽब्रवीत्सुधन्वाऽऽङ्गिरस इति तं यदा लोकानामन्तानपृच्छामाथैनमब्रूम क्व पारिक्षिता अभवन्निति क्व पारिक्षिता अभवन् स त्वा पृच्छामि याज्ञवल्क्य क्व पारिक्षिता अभवन्निति ।

Little is known about the Ṛṣis Bhujyu Lāhyāyani (descendant of Lāhyāyana) and Patañcala Kāpya (a descendant of Kapi).[22] Yājñavalkya is well-known as an authority on the questions of Ritual and Philosophy. He was a pupil of Uddālaka Āruṇi and belonged to the Kurus.[23] The text indicates the historical importance of the descendants of Parikṣit.

The daughter of Patañcala was possessed by a Gandharva named Sudhanvā of the family of Aṅgiras. Bhujyu asked him about the boundaries of the world and while doing so wanted to know where the descendants of Parikṣit were. Bhujyu repeats the same question to Yājñavalkya.

iii. 3.2:

> स होवाचोवाच वै सोऽगच्छन्वै ते तद्यत्राश्वमेधयाजिनो गच्छन्तीति क्व . . ।

The reply of Yājñavalkya shows that the descendants of Parikṣit were known for performing Aśvamedha sacrifices. It is suggestive of the glory of these kings that Indra in the shape of falcon is stated to have surrendered them personally to the wind who then carried them to the region where the performers of the Aśvamedha sacrifice abide.

According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa[24] Parikṣit performed three Aśvamedha sacrifices on the bank of the Gaṅgā with Śāradvata Kṛpācārya as his priest. He offered rich sacrificial rewards and the gods graced the occasion with their physical presence. We also know from the Aitareya[25] and the Śatapatha[26] Brāhmaṇas that Janamejaya Pārikṣita performed Aśvamedha sacrifices, at Āsandīvat, the present town of Asandh in district Karnal of Haryana and the pre-Harrapan site of Kārotī[28] near Nohar in Rajasthan just across the western boundary of the state with Tura Kāvaṣeya and Indrota Devāpi Śaunaka as the respective priests. Kārotī is situated on the bed of the Ṛgvedic river Dṛṣadvatī which goes on to meet the Vedic Sarasvatī before the combined stream is lost in the sands about Kalibangan, the spot well-known in literature by the name of Vinaśana.[29] In the Vedic age the Marus formed the western limit of Kurukṣetra[30] which is described as the sacrificial altar of gods. Later its place is taken by Vinaśana beyond which lay the territories of the Śūdrābhīras[31] and Niṣādas.[32] As a matter of fact the three sons of Janamejaya, Bhīmasena, Ugrasena and Śrutasena are also named among the performers of the Aśvamedha.

Evidently the successors of Parikṣit were able to maintain their family tradition of performing the Aśvamedha sacrifice as paramount rulers in the region. Bhujyu's question is therefore intended to test Yājñavalkya's knowledge of history. It also points to the distant past to which, in the eyes of the author of the Upaniṣad the descendants of Parikṣit belonged.

iii. 9.19:

> याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच शाकल्यो यदिदं कुरुपञ्चालानां ब्राह्मणानत्यवादीः किं ब्रह्म विद्वानिति दिशो वेद स देवाः सप्रतिष्ठा इति यद्दिशो वेत्थ स देवाः सप्रतिष्ठाः ॥

Śākalya the descendant of Śakala is the patronymic of Vidagdha in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[33] and of Sthavira in the Aitareya[34] and Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyakas.[35] In the Purāṇas[36] one Vedamitra or Devamitra is also known as Śākalya. The present Śākalya probably refers to Vidagdha after whom the available Ṛgveda text is known as Śakala Saṁhitā. It is possible that he is the original maker of the Padapāṭha of Ṛgveda.[37] Śākalya is piqued by the idea of Yājñavalkya becoming conceited by defeating the Kuru-Pañcāla Brāhmaṇas in philosophical argument.

The Brāhmaṇas of the Kurus and Pañcālas were known and even feared for their learning[38] and defeating them in debate was naturally a matter of great pride for anyone.

V. 1.1:

ॐ पूर्णमदः ॥ ॐ खं ब्रह्म खं पुराणं वायुरं खमिति ह स्माह कौरव्यायणी पुत्रो वेदोऽयं ब्राह्मणा विदुर्वेदेनेन यद्वेदितव्यम् ॥

Kauravyāyaṇi-Putra refers to the son of a female descendant of Kuru. Nothing more is known about him except that he is named as a teacher. Apparently he was a philosopher Kuru-king.

2. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*

i. 10.1-3:

मटचीहतेषु कुरुष्वाटिक्या सह जाययोषस्तिहं चाक्रायण इभ्यग्रामे प्रद्राणक उवास । १

स हेभ्यं कूल्माषान्खादन्तं बिभिक्षे तं होवाच । नेतोऽन्ये विद्यन्ते यच्च ये म इम उपनिहिता इति । २

एतेषां मे देहीति होवाच, तानस्मै प्रददौ हन्तानुपानमित्युच्छिष्टं वै मे पोतं स्यादिति होवाच । ३

There is a reference here to a famine in the land of the Kurus on account of a severe hail storm[39] (Maiaci, which has also been rendered as locust[40] in which case the famine might have been caused by an attack of locust swarm). In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad the name Uṣasti is spelt as Uṣasta.[41] He was the son of Cakra and belonged to the Kuru country. The famine was so severe that Uṣasti and his wife Āṭikī had to leave their village and accept left-overs of a dish of beans at an elephant-driver's place.

iv. 2.1-5:

तदु ह जानश्रुतिः पौत्रायणः षट् शतानि गवां निष्कमश्वतरीरथं तदादाय प्रतिचक्रमे तं हाभ्युवाद । १

रैक्वेमानि षट् शतानि गवामयं निष्कोऽयमश्वतरीरथो नु म एतां भगवो देवतां शाधि यां देवतामुपास्स इति । २

तमु ह परः प्रत्युवाचाह हारेत्वा शूद्र तवैव सह गोभिरस्त्विति तदुह पुनरेव जानश्रुतिः पौत्रायणः सहस्रं गवां निष्कमश्वतरीरथं दुहितरं तदादाय प्रतिचक्रमे । ३

तं हाभ्युवाद रैक्वेदं सहस्रं गवामयं निष्कोऽयमश्वतरीरथ इयं जायाऽयं ग्रामो यस्मिन्नास्सेऽन्वेव मा भगवः शाधीति । ४

तस्या ह मुखमुपोद्गृह्लन्नुवाचाजहारेमाः शूद्रानेनैव मुखेनालापयिष्यथा इति ते हैते रैक्वपर्णा नाम महावृषेषु यत्रास्मा उवास तस्मै होवाच । ५

These passages along with the preceding part (i) relate the story of acquisition of spiritual knowledge by Pautrāyaṇa the descendant of Janaśruta, king of the Mahāvṛṣas from sage Raikva. The country of the Mahāvṛṣas lay about Vinaśana and was roughly bounded by the Kurus on the east and extended in the west into the part of Rajasthan later associated with the Śūdras, Ābhīras and Niṣādas. It was known for its valuable breed of Zebu cattle which gave them their totemic name. At the prime of their power the Mahāvṛṣas controlled parts of Kurukṣetra adjoining their territories on the east. The name Raikvaparṇa of a group of villages given by the king to Raikva still survives in the name Raikon ki Dhani in district Ganganagar of Rajasthan. Many families of Raikas, undoubtedly the descendants of Raikva, are living in tehsil Nohar in this group of villages including Pandusar, Dhani Raikan, Naiyasar, Dhirdesar and Moter. The Mahāvṛṣas find mention in the Atharvaveda and some later Vedic works also.[42]

iv. 3.5:

अथ ह शौनकं च कापेयमभिप्रतारिणं च काक्षसेनिं परिविष्यमाणौ ब्रह्मचारी बिभिक्षे तस्मा उ ह न ददतुः ।

Abhipratārin son of Kakṣasena was another philosopher Kuru king.[43] He is mentioned in the Jaiminīya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa[44] and the Pañcaviṁśa-Brāhmaṇa[45] as engaged in philosophic discussions. According to the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[46] his sons divided the property amongst themselves while he was still alive. Śaunaka descendant of Kapi was his Purohita according to another passage of the Jaiminīya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmana.[47]

iv. 17.10:

मानवो ब्रह्मैवैक ऋत्विक्कुरुनश्वाभिरक्षत्येवं विद्ध वै ब्रह्मा यज्ञं यजमानं सर्वांश्चर्त्विजोऽभिरक्षति तस्मादेवंविदमेव ब्रह्माणं कुर्वीत नानेवंविदं नानेवंविदम् ॥

The word Kuru in this passage has been construed by some scholars to mean "a warrior"[48] but the authors of the Vedic Index[49] appear to be right in taking it to represent the Kuru tribe. The reference is thus made here to the Kurus being saved by a mare (Aśvā). The disaster from which they were saved is not mentioned. There are hints at several places towards some misfortunes suffered by the Kurus. The Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra[50] alludes to their being driven from Kurukṣetra. The Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[51] records their failure to achieve success in a sacrifice and consequent expulsion by the Śālvas from Kurukṣetra. It also describes a Bharata king named Sindhukṣit as held up on the other side of the Indus and praying to be restored to his home and kingdom.[52] The Mahābhārata[53] describes a great set-back to the Kurus when Kuru's father Samvaraṇa was overwhelmed in

battle by one Pāñcālya and obliged to flee with his wife, son, minister and intimates from his kingdom which he was able to regain later with the help of Vasiṣṭha. The reference to the frequent performance of Aśvamedha sacrifice by the Kuru kings has already been noted above. In the context of a great conflict between the Śālvas and the Kurus, the protection of the Kurus by a mare can be explained as the victory of their cavalry over the elephant corpse of the Śālvas who belonged to the hilly region of the Yamuna, where elephants were found in abundance. They must have maintained a strong elephant corpse in their army. It is significant that the Śālva king is said to have invaded Dvaraka with a force comprising foot soldiers and elephants[54] and fought in the Mahābhārata battle riding the best elephant of Duryodhana.[55] It would therefore be more appropriate to accept this reference as alluding to the protective merit earned by the Kuru kings from the performance of Aśvamedha sacrifices.

v. 3.1:

श्वेतकेतुर्हारुणेयः पञ्चालानां समितिमेयाय तं ह प्रवाहणो जैवलिरुवाच कुमारानु त्वाशिषत्पितेत्यनु हि भगव इति ॥

Uddālaka, son of Aruṇa is known as a Kuru-Pañcāla Brāhmaṇa and one of the most prominent teachers of the Vedic period.[56] His son Śvetaketu is described here as repairing to the court of Pravāhaṇa Jaivali king of the Pañcālas. The Kurus are often mentioned with the Pañcālas. The reference here appears to suggest that Uddālaka Āruṇi and his son Śvetaketu belonged to the Kurus.

v. 11.1-2:

प्राचीनशाल औपमन्यवः सत्ययज्ञः पौलुषिरिन्द्रद्युम्नो भाल्लवेयो जनः शार्कराक्ष्यो वुडिल आश्वतराश्विस्ते हैते महाशालां महाश्रोत्रियाः समेत्य मीमांसां चक्रुः को नु आत्मा किं ब्रह्मेति ॥१॥ ते ह संपादयां चक्रुरुद्दालको वै भगवन्तोऽयमारुणिः संप्रतीममात्मानं वैश्वानरमध्येति तं हन्ताभ्यागच्छामेति तं हाभ्याजग्मुः ॥२॥

Prācīnaśāla, son of Upamanyu, Satyayajña son of Puluṣa, Indradyumna, son of Bhallava, Jana, son of Śarkarākṣa and Buḍila, son of Aśvatarāśva decide to approach Uddālaka Āruṇi to acquire knowledge of the soul Vaiśvānara. Although the nativity of the Ṛṣis's excepting Uddālaka is not clear we can say that Prācīnaśāla the descendant of Upamanyu belonged to the Kurus since the latter is known as one of the pupils of Dhaumya[57] whose association with the Pāṇḍavas is testified by the Mahābhārata.[58] His other companions also probably belonged to the Kurus.

3. *Kauṣītakī-Brāhmaṇa-Upaniṣad* :

iii. 1:

प्रतर्दनो ह वै दैवोदासिरिन्द्रस्य प्रियं धामोपजगाम युद्धेन च पौरुषेण च तं हेन्द्र उवाच प्रतर्दन वरं वृणीष्व इति· · ·।

King Pratardana, a descendant of Divodāsa is here said to have attained the world of Indra through his death in battle. In the Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇa[58a] he is mentioned as arriving at the sacrifice of the Ṛṣis in the Naimiṣa forest and asking them how errors in the sacrifice could be remedied. The original Naimiṣa forest was in Kurukṣetra which indicates his connection with this land.[58b] It is further confirmed by his being a descendant of Divodāsa who was a father or grand-father of Sudās, the famous king of Tṛtsu Bharatas[58c] who has been stated as having been granted to Vadhryaśva as son by Sarasvatī[58d] and having fought against the Paṇis, the Pārāvatas and Bṛsaya at its banks.[58e] In the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[58f] his son Kṣatra is said to have been attacked by ten kings at Mānuṣa which appears as the name of a lake or place in the Ṛgveda.[58g] If the fight at Mānuṣa was one of the battles fought during the famous Dāśa Rājya war of Sudās Pratardana might be an uncle of Sudās. His son Kṣatra was a contemporary of Sudās and fought probably as his ally in different engagements in the same war. Also both were descendants of Divodāsa and ruled in the same country. This Pratardana could not have been a king of Kāśī Janapada who is mentioned in the Purāṇas.[58h]

iv. 1:

> अथ ह वै गार्ग्यो बालकिरनूचानः संस्पष्ट आस सोऽवसदुशीनरेषु सवसन्मत्स्येषु कुरुपञ्चालेषु काशिविदेहेष्विति स होजातशत्रुं काश्यमाव्रज्योवाच ब्रह्म ते ब्रवाणीति तं होवाचाजातशत्रुः सहस्रं दद्म इत्येतस्यां वाचि जनको जनक इति वा उ जना धावन्तीति ॥

Kurus are mentioned as one of the countries (including Uśīnara, Matsya, Pañcāla, Kāśī and Videha) which were visited by Gārgya, the son of Balāka during his Vedic studies. Little is known about Gārgya, descendant of Garga[59] who is also mentioned in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.[60] The second Vaṁśa list of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka[61] actually mentions two Gārgyas. Others occur in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[62] and the Nirukta[63] as well as in the ritual Sūtras. Gārgya is said here to have resided in the region of the Kurus and Pañcālas apart from Uśīnaras, Matsyas, Kāśis and Videhas before he goes to Ajātaśatru king of Kāśī and is cured of his conceit.

4. *Jābālopaniṣad*:

i:

> ॐ बृहस्पतिरुवाच याज्ञवल्क्यं यदनु कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनं सर्वेषां भूतानां ब्रह्मसदनम्। अविमुक्तं वै कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनं सर्वेषां भूतानां ब्रह्मसदनम्। तस्माद्यत्र क्वचन गच्छति तदेव मन्येत तदविमुक्तमेव। इदं वै जन्तोः प्राणेषूत्क्रममाणेषु रुद्रस्तारकं ब्रह्म व्याचष्टे येनासावमृतीभूत्वा मोक्षीभवति तस्मादविमुक्तमेव निषेवेत अविमुक्तं न विमुञ्चेदेवमेतद् याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

Bṛhaspati in this passage addresses Yājñavalkya and describes Kurukṣetra as a place of sacrifice of the gods and the Brahman-seat of all beings. Avimukta, known to be a place in Kāśī[65] is compared with Kurukṣetra. The Parivrājaka is advised to consider every place as true Kurukṣetra, the gods' place of sacrifice and the Brahman-seat of all beings. When the vital breath departs out of a person, Rudra is said to impart the saving formula, by which one participates in immortality and liberation. The passage suggests the shifting of the centre of Indian culture towards Kāśī from Kurukṣetra which however, still appears as the most sacred Tīrtha.

The passage is repeated almost verbatim in ŚrīRāmottaratāpinyupaniṣad[66] as its opening para. Here however Avimukta appears to have been used as an adjective of Kurukṣetra which could perhaps mean "not abandoned by the gods." As a matter of fact this interpretation of Avimukta might appear more appropriate in case of the above passage of Jābālopaniṣad too.

This passage is particularly popular since it has been reproduced in the Tārāsāropaniṣad[67] also.

5. *Dakṣiṇāmūrti Upaniṣad* :

i.

ॐ ब्रह्मावर्ते महाभाण्डीरवटमूले महासत्राय समेता महर्षयः शौनकादयस्ते ह समित्पाणयस्तत्वजिज्ञासवो मार्कण्डेयं चिरंजीविनमुपसमेत्य पप्रच्छुः केन त्वं चिरं जीवसि केन वानन्दमनुभवसीति ।

Maharṣis led by Śaunaka are stated to have gathered under a lofty Nyagrodha tree in Brahmāvarta for the performance of a long sacrificial session. Desirous of knowing the truth, they approached the long-lived Mārkaṇḍeya holding Kuśa grass in their hands and asked him the secret of his long life and bliss.

Brahmāvarta was the name of the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab.[68] The name is also applied to a landing ghat on the Ganges at Bithur in the district of Kanpur which is known as Brahmāvarta Tīrtha.[69] Since Śaunaka is connected with the Kurus Brahmāvarta of the Kurus is meant here. The region was well known for the performance of Sattras in the Naimiṣa forest[70] and along the holy rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī.[71]

6. *Itihāsa Upaniṣad* :

ॐ वृषादर्विकुलं ह वै शिविकुलं बभूव । तस्यायमितिहासः कुलविद्या बभूव । तद्यो ह स्मेममधीते स ह स्मै राजा भवति । स किञ्चित्प्राप्यान्तर्हितः । सोऽब्रवीत् । यो मामितिहासं ग्राहयेत् । वरमस्मै दद्यामिति ।. . .

Vṛṣādarvi's family belonged to the Śibi tribe. Their family specialised in the study of history.

Śibis have been identified with the Śibois of the Greek historians[72] and the Śivas of the Ṛgveda.[73] They were also called Mūjavatas on account of abundant growth of Muñja grass. They occupied the areas of Jind, Hisar and Sirsa in the narrowing doab of the rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī extending down to their confluence and formed a part of Kurukṣetra.[74]

7. *Chāgaleya Upaniṣad* :

i. ॐ ऋषयो वै सरस्वत्यां सत्रमासत । तेऽथ कवषमैलूषं दास्याःपुत्र इति दीक्षाया आच्छिदन् । ते होचुः । अप वा एतदृग्यजुषादप साम्न इति । स होवाच । भगवन्तो यदिदं सत्रमाध्वे यदृचोऽधीध्वे यद्यजूंषि यत्सामानि कस्यायं महिमेति । ते होचुर्ब्राह्मणा वाव स्मस्तेषामेवमिति ।

iii. स होवाच । नैमिषेऽमी शुनकाः सत्रमासत । . . .

iv. कुरुक्षेत्र एवोपसमेत्य ये बालिशास्तानुपाध्वे । . . .

ते ह तत एवोपसमेत्य कुरुक्षेत्रमुपजग्मुः । . . . कुरुक्षेत्रमध्यासत इति ।

The sacred Sarasvatī is again presented here as a venue of a sacrificial session by the Ṛṣis. Kavaṣa is a prominent Vedic seer. He is mentioned in a hymn of the Ṛgveda[75] while the Anukramaṇī attributes to him the authorship of several hymns of the Ṛgveda including X.32 and X.33 which deal with prince Kuruśravaṇa and his descendant Upamaśravas.[76] According to Zimmer Kavaṣa was the Purohita of the joint tribes named Vaikarṇa who comprised the Kuru-Pañcālas.[77] Our passage follows the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[78] in describing Kavaṣa Ailūṣa as a Brāhmaṇa born of a female slave who was reproached on this ground by the other Ṛṣis. The passages also mention Naimiṣa as the venue of a sacrificial session of the descendants of Śaunaka. Kurukṣetra too has been repeatedly mentioned which supports the location of Naimiṣa in Kurukṣetra. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa the Ṛṣis expel Kavaṣa in the desert away from the bank of the Sarasvatī in the hope that he would die of thirst. Kavaṣa however sees the Aponaptriya hymn as a result of which the waters of the Sarasvatī burst forth all around him and he is saved. The spot where the waters of the Sarasvatī surround him is named in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa as Parisaraka which probably is later known as the Saraka Tīrtha.[79]

Incidentally it suggests that the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa belongs to a date after the desiccation of the Sarasvatī. The Satra was thus in all probability performed by the Ṛṣis somewhere in the region of Vinaśana and Parisaraka or Saraka should also be located there, and not near Kaithal.[80]

8. *Jābāladarśana Upaniṣad* :

iv. 49:

कुरुक्षेत्रं कुचस्थाने प्रयागं हृत्सरोरुहे ।
चिदम्बरं तु हृन्मध्ये आधारे कमलालयम् ॥

The verse visualises parts of human body as Tirthas and attributes Kurukṣetra to Kucasthāna or the region of the breasts. The idea is that the body is itself a Tirtha and it is more important to keep it pure and clean. The next verse[81] declares that a person looking for Tirthas outside his own person is like one looking for pieces of glass after discarding the jewel in his own hand.

9. *Śiva Upaniṣad* :

vi. 189.

श्रीपर्वते महाकाले वाराणस्यां महालये ।
जल्पेश्वरे कुरुक्षेत्रे केदारे मण्डलेश्वरे ॥

Kurukṣetra is here counted among Śivakṣetras where in case of death one attains the world of Śiva (Śivaloka).

The information available from the material before us throws welcome light, among other things, on the sanctity of the Kurus or Kurukṣetra, their political supremacy, their relations with neighbouring states, munificence and spiritual leanings of enlightened rulers of the age, natural calamities and political reverses suffered by them and their people, the erudition, philosophical wisdom and debating skill of contemporary sages for which they were held in great esteem and popularity of metaphysical discussions.

These are the references relating to the Kurus which we have noticed in the Upaniṣads. Identical or almost identical passages occurring in more than one text or at more than one place in the same text have been reproduced only once with all relevant citations. Learned readers are requested to take the trouble of drawing our attention to any reference that might have been left unnoticed.

Notes and References

1. Vāmana Purāṇa, Cr. ed., Anand Swarup Gupta, Varanasi 1967, Sm., 22.34:

· · · यस्मिन् स्थाने स्थितं ह्यण्डं तस्मिन् सन्निहितं सरः ।

2. Mahābhārata, Poona, Cr. ed., Śalya, 39.35:

ससर्ज यत्र भगवाँल्लोकान् लोकपितामहः ।

3. Vāmana Purāṇa, Sm., 18. 21-22:

 ···पृथूदकं समाश्रित्य सरस्वत्यास्तटे स्थितः ॥
 चातुर्वर्ण्यस्य सृष्ट्यर्थमात्मज्ञानपरोऽभवत् । . . .

4. Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Ed. Prof. J.L. Shastri, First ed. Delhi 1983, III. 21.6:

 प्रजाः सृजेति भगवान् कर्दमो ब्रह्मणोदितः ।
 सरस्वत्यां तपस्तेपे सहस्राणां समा दश ॥

5. Manusmṛti, II.17:

 सरस्वतीदृषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् ।
 तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्तं प्रचक्षते ॥

6. See for example Keith A.B., The Veda of the Black Yajus School, Second issue Delhi 1967, Introduction, p. XCIII and Winternitz M., History of Indian Literature, Vol. I, Reprint, Delhi 1987, p. 196.

7. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB), xiii. 5.4.23:

 महदद्य भरतानान्न पूर्वे नापरे जनाः । दिव मर्त्यऽइव पक्षाभ्यान्नोदापुः सप्तमानवा ऽ इति ।

8. viii. 1.1:

 तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत्, तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्ध आसोत्, तूघ्नंमुत्तरार्धः, परिणज्जघनार्धः, मरवः उत्करः ।

9. Kane P.V., History of the Dharmaśāstra, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1973, Vol. IV, p. 681.
 Also Dey N.L., The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, 3rd ed., New Delhi 1971, p. 194.

10. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 23.

11. ix. 5.2.15.

 अथ ह स्म आह शाण्डिल्यः । तुरो ह कावषेयः कारोत्यां देवेभ्योऽग्निं चिकाय . . . ।

12. "कुरुभूमिजाः जनाः स्थानेश्वरे निवसन्ति"
 See Ajay Mitra Shastri, India as seen in the Bṛhatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihira, Delhi 1969, p.85.

13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Studies, p. 159 f.
16. Winternitz, M., *op. cit.*, p. 216.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 217 f.
18. X. 3.5.12:

 तस्य वा एतस्य यजुषो रस एव उपनिषद् ।

19. Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 221 f.
20. Dasgupta S.N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Five Volumes 1st Indian Edition, Delhi 1975, Vol. I, p. 28.
21. For Sanskrit text and English translation of the Upaniṣads following works have been used in this study:
 (i) Shastri J.L. ed., Upaniṣatsaṅgrahaḥ, Reprint, Delhi 1980.
 (ii) Deusen Paul, Sixty Upaniṣads of the Veda, Translated from German by Bedekar and Palsule, Two volumes, First ed., Delhi 1980.
 (iii) Roer E., The Twelve Principal Upaniṣads, Text in Devanagari and tr. and notes in English. Three volumes, Adyar 1931.
 (iv) Limaye and Valekar, Eighteen Principal Upaniṣads, Vol. I, Poona 1958.
22. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 473.
23. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 189.
24. i. 16.3:

 आजहाराश्वमेधांस्त्रीन् गंगायां भूरिदक्षिणान् ।
 शारद्वतं गुरुं कृत्वा देवा यत्राक्षगोचराः ॥

25. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VIII. 21:

 एतेन ह वा ऐन्द्रेण महाभिषेकेण तुरः कावषेयो जनमेजयं पारिक्षितमभिषिषेच, तस्मादु जनमेजयः पारिक्षितः समन्तं सर्वतः पृथिवीं जयन् परीयायाश्वेन च मेध्येनेजे ॥

26. ŚB., XIII. 5.4. 1-3:
27. Studies, p. 195.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 116 ff.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 20 ff.
30. See No. 8 supra.
31. Mbh., Śalya, 37.1:

 शूद्राभीरान् प्रति द्वेषाद्यत्र नष्टा सरस्वती ।

32. Mbh., Vana, 130. 3-4:

 एषा सरस्वती रम्या दिव्या चोघवती नदी ।
 एतद् विनशनं नाम सरस्वत्या विशाम्पते ॥
 द्वारं निषाद राष्ट्रस्य येषां द्वेषात् सरस्वती ।
 प्रविष्टा पृथिवीं वीर मा निषादा हि मां विदुः ॥

33. XI. 6.3.3.
34. III. 2.1.6.

35. VII. 16; VIII. 1.11.
36. Siddheśvarashastri Citrava, Prāctna Caritrakośa, Poona 1964, p. 956.
37. Cf. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 360 f.
38. ŚB., XI. 4.1. 1-2:

 ... उदीच्यानां ब्राह्मणान्भीविवेद ।१। कौरुपाञ्चालो वा अयम्ब्रह्मा ब्रह्मपुत्रः ।
 यद्वै नोऽयमद्धैत्र पर्याददीत् ... ।

39. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 166.
40. Ed. Limaye and Valekar, Vol. I, p. 79.
41. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 104.
42. e.g. Atharva-Veda, V. 22.4; 5; 8; Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, i. 234; ŚB., (Kāṇvīya rec.) iv. 2.3.10; Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa, iii. 40.2; Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, ii. 5.
43. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 27.
44. I. 59.1; III. 1.21; II. 2.13.
45. X. 5.7; XIV. 1.12; 15.
46. III. 1.56.
47. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 396.
48. Mitra and Cowell, Vol. III, p. 149.
49. Vol. I, p. 166 ff.
50. XV. 16. 12-13.
51. Ed. Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra, Nagpur 1954, II. 206.
52. III. 82.
53. Ādi., 94. 37-38.
54. Vana, 16.1.
55. Śalya, 20. 1-4.
56. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 87.
57. Prāctna Caritra Kośa, p. 85.
58. Ādi., 182.2.

58a. 26.5.
58b. Studies, pp. 129-137.
58c. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 363.
58d. Rgveda, vi. 31.1.
58e. RV., vi. 61.1.
58f. iii. 245:

 क्षत्रं वै प्रातर्दनं दाशराज्ञे दश राजानः पर्ययतन्त मानुषे ।

58g. Ram Gopal, "A New Interpretation of the Vedic word Mānuṣa," Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Vol. XVII, pts. 3-4, pp. 193-202.
58h. Mbh., Anuśāsana, XXX. 16 and 30. Also see Bhargava, P.L., India in the Vedic Age, pp. 59, 79.

59. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 226.
60. II. 1.1.
61. Kāṇva rec., IV. 6.2.
62. I. 7.3.
63. I. 3.12; III. 13.
64. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 226.
65. Vol. II, p. 757.
66. V, 20.
67. 1.1.
68. Manusmṛti, II. 17.
69. Dey, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
70. Studies, p. 129 ff.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 35, N. 14.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 251, N. 200.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 251, N. 196.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 210 ff.
75. Ṛgveda, VII. 18.12.
76. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 143.
77. *Ibid.*
78. II. 19.
79. Mbh., Vana, 83.75; 76; 81 and Vāmana P., Sm., 15.18 ff.
80. A.S.I. Vol. XIV, p. 104.
81. IV. 50.

5

BUDDHA'S SERMONS IN KURUKṢETRA

According to the *Aṭṭhakathā* (*Manoratha-pūraṇī*) of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and the *Buddhavamsa Aṭṭhakathā* (*Madhuratthavilāsinī*) Gautama Buddha renounced the world at the age of 29 years. During the next nine years he performed austere penance and attained Buddhahood. For 46 years thereafter he travelled from state to state, town to town and village to village propagating the faith and sojourning at any one place only during the rainy season.[1]

Although the part of the country nearer home naturally claimed more of his time and attention he took trouble to visit even remote areas some of which, like the Uttara Kurus,[2] were by no means easy of access. Kurukṣetra, the ancient land of the Kurus was also favoured with several visits. The *Bhaiṣajyavastu* in the *Vinaya* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C.[3] describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ānanda. In this tour Buddha went from Hastināpura through Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmaṇagrāma and Kālanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhāra as far as Uḍḍiyāna and back.[4] Other towns like Bhadraṅkara,[5] Kammāsadamma[6] and Ṭhullakoṭṭhita[7] were also visited by him during journeys undertaken on different occasions.

Although by the time of the Buddha, the age of political ascendancy of the Kurus was past they still enjoyed considerable prestige culturally. The Kuru janapada is named in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* among the sixteen mahājanapadas or

prominent states of Jambūdvīpa, having abundant food and wealth and the seven kinds of gems.[8] It was 8000 yojanas in extent and divided into two portions, Uttarakuru and Dakṣiṇakuru. The King of the Kurus is named as Dhanañjaya Koravya who ruled from Indraprastha and belonged to Yudhiṭṭhila gotta or the family of Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the Pāṇḍavas.[10] The climate was agreeable and food was rich. The people, therefore, enjoyed good health physically as well as mentally and were always ready to receive instruction in profound religious truths. The Bhikṣus, Bhikṣuṇīs and the Upāsakas and Upāsikās, all conducted themselves in the spirit of *Smṛtiprasthāna.* The talk of the domestic servants and labourers revolved around it; so much so that even at the village wells and weaving centres none indulged in idle gossip."

Buddhist literature is, indeed, full of stories in which the land of the Kurus and its people and princes play a leading part.[12] Bodhisattva is born to the chief queen of the Kuru king Dhanañjaya in his capital city of Indapatta. On coming to the throne the Bodhisattva along with his family and officials adopts and obeys the Kurudhamma which consisted in the observance of the Five Śīlas or rules of moral conduct and possessed the mystic virtue of ushering prosperity in a country where it was practised.[13] This established idea of righteousness prevailing among the Kuru people is made explicit again and again. In the *Mahāvastu*, for instance, the Kuru prince Sudhanu praises morality and non-violence, whereas Aṣṭamaka, another Kuru King shows his concern for the next world. Yet another Kuru King Mahendra dedicates his life to wait upon a Buddha. The story of King Dhanañjaya and his wise minister Vidhura Paṇḍita finds repeated mention in the Jātakas.

It has been well observed that it is this fame of the Kurus that is reflected in the traditional belief that men of Uttarakuru are virtuous by nature.[14] And the great esteem accorded to Kurudhamma in Buddhism reminds us of Manu's statement that the moral values evolved in this land are worthy of emulation by humanity all over the world.[15] Penetration into this acknowledged stronghold of Brahmanism must have posed a challenge to the zealous Redeemer and he did not ignore it. How far he succeeded in winning over the people of Kurukṣetra and inducing them to look for enlightenment in Buddhism need not detain us here. We have examined it briefly elsewhere.[16] Here we propose to take note of the Suttas or sermons delivered by the Buddha among the Kurus.

The Buddha visited at least nine cities of Kurukṣetra, namely Hastināpura, Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmaṇagrāma, Kālanagara, Rohitaka, Bhadraṅkara, Thullakoṭṭhita and Kammāsadamma. The towns of Hastināpura and Rohitaka are well known. So is the identification of Srughna with the village of Sugh near Jagadhari in district Ambala.[17] Of the remaining names Mahānagara has been equated with Indapatta or Indraprastha as suggested by the arrangement of the place names in Buddha's journey described in the *Bhaiṣajyavastu.* The site of the

ancient town has been located and excavated near the Old Fort in New Delhi leading to the discovery of Painted Grey Ware.[18] The Brāhmaṇagrāma of the *Vinaya* appears to be identical with the town named Thūṇā which has also been described as a Brāhmaṇagrāma and located on the western boundary of Madhya Deśa in the *Mahāvagga*[19] and the *Divyāvadāna*.[20] We have identified this town with Tohana, Tauṣāyaṇa of Pāṇini,[21] which presents a close linguistic similarity with it. It can also be said roughly to be located on the western boundary of the Madhya Deśa and eminently fits into the route taken by the Buddha. Kālanagara meets the location of the present town of Kalanaur which lies 12 miles west of Rohtak on the road to Bhiwani.

Bhaiṣajyavastu[22] gives a detailed account of the conversion by the Buddha of the Gṛhapati Mendhaka of Bhadrańkara, capital of the republic of the same name. An almost identical version of this account finds place in the *Divyāvadāna*.[23] Bhadrańkara has been equated with Bhadrakāra, one of the Śālva group of tribes. The town proper, apparently their capital, was located on the outskirts of the Madhya Deśa and answers to the situation of the present town of Bhakra on the eastern bank of the Sutlej where the well known Bhakra Dam has been built.[24] The name Ṭhullakoṭṭhita still survives in the name of the twin village of Ṭhoḷ Kurḍi on the road leading from Ambala City to Thanesar-Kurukṣetra via Jhansa. It is a big village overlooked by a huge mound, now almost completely eroded, and enjoys considerable prestige in rural areas of the region. It is a Painted Grey Ware site[25] and an ancient trade-route probably passed through it to Thanesar. This important town was the seat of the contemporary Kauravya King. He had a beautiful garden named Migacīra nearby. It was a prosperous market-place surrounded by rich and fertile country, plentiful in grains which kept the stores of the inhabitants always full, thereby earning it the name Ṭhullakoṭṭhita as explained by Buddhaghoṣa.[26] The name is also spelt as Sthūlakoṣṭhaka and Thullakaṭṭhika.[28]

Kammāsadamma, a celebrated trade centre was visited by the Buddha more than once. It was the residence of the nuns Nanduttarā and Nittakalikā.[29] The name is spelt as Kalmāsadamya in the *Divyāvadāna*[30] and *Buddhacarita* but the Jātakas mention two names of Cullakammāsadamma[32] and Mahākammāsadamma[33] of which the former was in Kampilla and the latter in the Kurus.[34] According to the *Jayaddisa Jātaka*[35] the town came to be known as Kammāsadamma because at this place the Bodhisattva, once born as a son of Jayaddisa of Kampilla, subdued his other son called Kammāsapāda, on account of a wound (Kammāsa) on his foot (pāda), who had turned into a cannibal due to evil influence of a Yakṣiṇī. In the *Mahāsutasoma Jātaka*, the name is attributed to the taming of Kalmāṣapāda Yakṣa here by Bodhisattva born as Sutasoma.[36] A similar explanation is offered by Buddhaghoṣa[37] who gives the name as Kammāsadamma which originated from the initiation of the demon Kammāsa into Kurudhamma, the celebrated faith of the Kuru people.

In view of the tradition connecting Kalmāṣapāda with it the original Sanskrit name was in all probability Kalmāṣadhāma, an abbreviated form of Kalmāṣapādadhāma or Kalmāṣadamana from Kalmāṣapādadamana. Even the Sanskrit form Kalmāṣadamya would not make much of a difference phonetically. Mitrasaha Kalmāṣapāda and his father Sudāsa are connected with Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra[38] who, according to the Mahābhārata, had their hermitages on the Sarasvatī, the former on its left bank near Sthāṇu tīrtha on the north east of Thanesar[39] and the latter on its right bank further down near Pṛthūdaka or Pehowa.[40] On all these considerations Kammāsadamma has been identified with village Kamoda situated 29°.55'N and 70°.40'E about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Kaithal not very far from the Prāci-Sarasvatī.[41] Local tradition associates the town with the Pāṇḍavas and the name makes a reasonably plausible phonetic equation with its Sanskrit and Pāli originals.[42]

Of these towns visited by the Buddha only the last two are material for our purpose. It was in these two towns that some of his most profound discourses, compiled in the four Nikāyas, were delivered. Nine discourses in all were delivered, one at Ṭhullakoṭṭhita by Raṭṭhapāla and eight at Kammāsadamma by the Buddha himself. These towns have been called Nigamas, or market towns, which were, as a rule, situated on trade-routes and their important confluences.[43] According to Moti Chandra[44] a Nigama was the city of bankers. It was of two categories, Sāṅgrahika and Asāṅgrahika. The former did the business of pledging the goods and deposits and the second, besides doing banking business, could also do other business. Ṭhullakoṭṭhita and Kammāsadamma were therefore important banking towns and trade centres regularly visited by a large number of people, not only from the neighbouring townships but also from distant places. Evidently they were chosen for the Buddha's visits with the idea that a large number of people from all sections of society would come into contact with his message.

A very brief resume of each discourse is given below mainly from Malalasekera's Dictionary of Pāli proper names. For the sake of convenience reference to the text of the Suttas as published by the Pāli Publication Board, Bihar and their English translation published by the Pāli Text Society, London is also added.

(a) Suttas delivered at Kammasadamma

(i) Mahānidāna Sutta[45]

This discourse occurs in the *Dīgha Nikāya* and was preached to Ānanda. Ānanda thought that he had clearly understood the doctrine of events as arising from causes and it looked deep only in appearance. The Buddha warns him that it was not so and proceeds to expound in detail the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* or the Chain of Causation as it was called later, explaining how each link in the chain of

Saṁsāra is both the effect of one factor and the cause of another. The Buddha then goes on to discuss the idea of "Soul," the seven resting places of cognition (*Viññānatthiti*), the two spheres (*Āyatana*), and the eight kinds of deliverance (*Vimokkha*).

(*ii*) *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[46]

This discourse also occurs in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Buddha explains to the monks that the one and the only path leading to *Nibbāna* is that of the Four Bases of Mindfulness. These, in brief, are the four ways of directing the mind to the impurities and the impermanency of the body: (1) *Kāya*, physical structure and activities; (2) *Vedanā*, the emotional nature, first as bare feeling, then as having ethical implications; (3) *Citta*, conscious life or intelligence, considered under ethical aspects; (4) *Dhamma*, considered under the five hindrances; the five groups (*khandhas*), the six spheres of sense, the seven *bojjhaṅgas*, and the four Ariyan Truths.

According to Malalasekera this Sutta is considered as one of the most important in the Buddhist Canon. It has been translated into various languages, and several commentaries on it are in existence. Its mere recital is said to ward off dangers and to bring happiness, and it is the desire of every Buddhist that he should die with the *Satipaṭṭhāna* Sutta on his lips, or, at least, with the sound of it in his ears.

(*iii*) *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[47]

This discourse occurs as the tenth Sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Like the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna* Sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya* it was addressed by the Buddha to the monks. The two Suttas are identical except that the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna* contains towards the end, additional paragraphs explaining in detail the Four Noble Truths. This additional portion forms a separate Sutta, the *Sacca Vibhaṅga* Sutta in the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

(*iv*) *Māgaṇḍiya Sutta*[48]

Forming a part of the *Majjhima Nikāya* this discourse contains the Buddha's address to the *Paribbājaka Māgaṇḍiya*. The discourse is provoked by Māgaṇḍiya's observation that the Buddha is a repressionist (*Bhunahu*) Buddha denies this saying that he teaches only the subjugation of the senses. Knowing their origin and their cessation he has discarded all craving after them and dwells with his heart at peace. He then relates how, in his youth, he had enjoyed the greatest and most luxurious kinds of sensuous pleasures and had renounced them. He could no more crave for them than a leper, cured of his disease, craves for his old sores. Both the Buddha and teachers of other persuasions are convinced that health is the greatest boon and *Nibbāna* the highest bliss. But the Buddha's conception of health and *Nibbāna*

differs from that of other teachers. Their knowledge is as that of a blind man, taken on trust.

Māgaṇḍiya listens and is convinced. He enters the Order and becomes an *arahant*.

(v) Āṇañjasappāya Sutta[49]

This discourse from the *Majjhima Nikāya* was preached by the Buddha to the monks, with Ānanda at their head. It deals with real Permanence (*āṇañjasappāya*) and with the various ways of meditating on impassibility and the attainments and true release. True Deathlessness is only the heart's deliverance (*anupādā cittassa vimokkhā*), and there are several stages of the paths that lead to it.

Buddhaghoṣa says that this Sutta describes the arahantship of the *Sukkhavipassakā*. Arahantship is mentioned in nine different connections in the Sutta, which is therefore praised as being well-taught (*sukathitaṁ*).

(vi) Nidāna Sutta[50]

This discourse, contained in the *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, was addressed to Ānanda by the Buddha. As in the Mahānidāna Sutta Ānanda tells Buddha that although the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* is so deep, yet, to him, it is so plane. The Buddha warns him against such an idea, because all Saṁsāra is due to lack of understanding of the Causal Law.

According to Malalasekera this Sutta was probably called the *Cūlanidāna Sutta* as opposed to *Mahānidāna* Sutta.

(vii) Sammasa Sutta[51]

This discourse, forming a part of the *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, was delivered by the Buddha to the monks. On the request of Ānanda, the Buddha explains to the monks that whosoever in former times, or in future times, or now, whether they be recluses or Brahmins, look upon whatever in the world seems lovely and pleasing as impermanent, as suffering, as not good, as disease, as danger, they put off craving, substance, and suffering. They are liberated from ill.

(viii) Ariyavasā Sutta[52]

This discourse occurs in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. The Buddha addresses the monks on the ten ways of Ariyan Living according to which Ariyans have lived, do live and shall live. He thus defines the stages when a monk has abandoned Five Factors, is possessed of Six Factors, guards One Factor, has observed Four Bases, has shaken off individual belief, has utterly given up longings, when his thoughts are unclouded, his body-complex tranquillized, he is well released, well released by insight.

(b) Sutta delivered at Thullakotthita

Raṭṭhapāla Sutta[53]

Only one discourse, again from the *Majjhima Nikāya*, was delivered at Thullakoṭṭhita, not by the Buddha but by Raṭṭhapāla, son of a wealthy councillor, to the Kuru King. It gives an account of Raṭṭhapāla's admission into the Order, his visits to his parents after attaining Arahantship, and his conversation with the Kuru king in the latter's Deer Park. This last conversation forms the chief theme of the discourse.

The king asks Raṭṭhapāla why he left his house when he suffers neither from old age, failing health, poverty, nor death of kinsfolk. Raṭṭhapāla answers that his reason for leaving it was his conviction of the truth of the four propositions enunciated by the Buddha (*cattāro dhammaddesā*) that the world (1) is in a state of continual flux and change; (2) there is no protector or preserver; (3) in it, we own nothing, but must leave all behind us; (4) it lacks and hankers, being enslaved by craving. He explains the meaning of these statements to the satisfaction of the king and summarises his statements in a series of stanzas.

This Sutta is mentioned as an example of a discourse in which the *rūpakammaṭṭhāna* is given first, leading on through *Vedanā* to the *arūpakammaṭṭhāna*.[54]

Rāhula Sānkrityāyana[55] erroneously mentions one more discourse, namely the *Mahāsakuludāyī* as delivered in the Kurus at Kammāsadamma. Actually this discourse of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, was delivered at Rājagṛha.[56]

The people of the Kurus had a reputation for deep wisdom and good health which is said to have prompted the Buddha to deliver his Suttas here.[57] Indeed it was considered a compliment to the intellectual calibre of the Kurus of Kammāsadamma that Buddha taught them Suttas like the *Satipaṭṭhāna*, the *Mahānidāna* and the *Sammasa*.[58]

Notes and References

1. For more details see B.S. Upadhyaya, *Buddhakālīna Bhāratīya Bhūgola* (Hindi), Prayag V.S. 2018, p. 90 ff.
2. G.P. Malalasekera, Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names, Two Vols., London 1960, Vol. I, p. 356.
3. M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Calcutta 1933, Vol. II, p. 232. According to G.P. Misra its Chinese and Tibetan translations do not go beyond the 5th century A.D. See *The Age of the Vinaya*, Delhi 1972, p. 7.
4. E. Frauwallner, The Earliest *Vinaya* and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature, Roma 1956, pp. 31-32.

5. *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* Pt. i. Ed. S. Bagchi (B.S.T. No. 16) Darbhanga 1967, p. 145 ff. Also *Divyāvadāna*, Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, *Meṇḍhaka-gṛhapativibhūti Parichhedaḥ*, p. 77 ff.
6. For instance *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. Rāhula Sānkrityāyana (Pāli Publication Board 1958, vol. ii, p. 198 ff. Also see infra.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 281 ff. Also see infra.
8. B.C. Law, Tribes in Ancient India, (Tribes) 2nd ed. Pune 1973, p. 22.
9. Dipak Kumar Barua, Analytical Study of the *Four Nikāyas*, Calcutta 1971, p. 334.
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12. Tribes, p. 22.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 28 f.
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16. O.P. Bharadwaj, Gautama Buddha in Kurukṣetra, Studies in Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, pp. 149-165.
17. Cunningham, A.S.I.R., Vol. II, 1862-65, p. 226 ff.
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19. Rati Lal N. Mehta, Pre-Buddhist India, Delhi 1939, p. 399.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
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22. Darbhanga ed., p. 145 ff.
23. p. 77 ff.
24. Studies, p. 155 f.
25. Suraj Bhan, Haryana Studies in History and Culture, Kurukṣetra 1968, p. 135.
26. Quoted by B.N. Chaudhury, Buddhist Centres in Ancient India, Calcutta 1969, p. 31.
27. Aśvaghoṣa, Buddha-Carita, 21.26.
28. Tribes, p. 22.
29. B.N. Chaudhury, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 515 f.
31. 21.27.
32. Fausboll, Vol. V, p. 21 ff. (*Jayaddisa Jātaka*, No. 518).
33. *Ibid.*, p. 456 ff. (*Mahāsutasomajātaka*, No. 537).
34. Cf. Upadhyaya, p. 408.
35. Fausboll, Vol. V, pp. 21-36.
36. *Ibid.*, Vol. V. pp. 456-511.
37. Upadhyaya, p. 409.

38. Cf. F.E. Pargiter, Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, Reprint, Delhi 1972, p. 207 ff.
39. Śalya 42.4:

 आश्रमो वै वसिष्ठस्य स्थाणुतीर्थेऽभवन् महान् ।
 पूर्वत: पार्श्वतश्चासीत् विश्वामित्रस्य धीमत: ॥

40. A.S.I.R., Vol. XIV, p. 103. A large mound known as *Viśvāmitra Kā Ṭīlā* still exists about a mile above Pehowa on the bank of the Prāci Sarasvatı: See D.B. Spooner, ASIR, 1921-22, p. 46 f.
41. Gazetteer of India and Pakistan, Delhi 1950, Vol. I, p. 569.
42. For a detailed examination of its identification see Studies, p. 157 ff.
43. Amita Ray, Villages, Towns and Secular Buildings in India, Calcutta 1964, p. 79.
44. Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India, New Delhi 1977, p. 159.
45. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 520; Text, *Dīgha Nikāya*, Ed. J.Kashyap, 1958, Vol. ii, p. 44 ff; Eng. Tr., T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 1851, pt. ii, p. 42 ff.
46. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 563; Text, *Dīgha Nikāya*, Ed. J. Kashyap, 1958, Vol. ii, p. 217 ff; Eng. Tr. T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 1951, pt. ii, p. 322 ff.
47. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 1007; Text, *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. P.V. Bapat, 1958, Vol. i, p. 76 ff. Eng. Tr., I.B. Horner, 1954, Vol. i, p. 70 ff.
48. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 595; Text, *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. Rāhula Sānkrityāyana 1958, Vol. ii, p. 198 ff. Eng. Tr., I.B. Horner, 1957, Vol. ii, p. 181 ff.
49. Malalasekera, Vol. i, p. 243; Text, *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. Rāhula Sānkrityāyana 1958, Vol. iii, p. 56 ff. Eng. Tr., I.B. Horner, 1954, Vol. iii, p. 46ff.
50. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 72 f; Text, *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, Ed. J. Kashyap 1959, Vol. ii, p. 79 ff; Eng. Tr. Mrs. Rhys Davids, 1962, pt. ii, p. 64 f.
51. Malalasekera, (Vol. ii, p. 1064), does not give its resume; Text, *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, Ed. J. Kashyap 1959, Vol. ii, p. 92 ff. Eng. Tr., Mrs. Rhys Davids 1952, pt. ii, p. 75 ff.
52. Malalasekera (Vol. i, p. 181) does not give its resume; Text, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Ed. J. Kashyap 1960, Vol. iv, p. 122 ff. Eng. Tr., F.L. Woodward 1955, Vol. v, p. 21 ff.
53. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 708; Text: *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. Rāhula Sānkrityāyana 1958, Vol. ii, p. 281 ff; Eng. Tr., I.B. Horner 1957, Vol. ii, p. 250 ff.
54. Malalasekera, Vol. ii, p. 708.
55. *Pāli Sāhitya Kā Itihāsa* (Hindi), 2nd ed. Lucknow 1973, p. 61.
56. See Text, *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ed. Rāhula Sānkrityāyana 1958, Vol. ii, p. 224.
57. Malalasekera, Vol. i, p. 641.
58. The Book of the Kindred Sayings (*Saṁyutta Nikāya* Eng. Tr.), Mrs. Rhys Davids and F.H. Woodward, P.T.S. London 1952, pt. ii, p. 75 f. n. 3.

6

KURUKṢETRA AND VIṢṆU'S INCARNATIONS

The land known by the name of Kurukṣetra in early Sanskrit literature was slightly more extensive than the present state of Haryana. It has been described in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[1] as having Khāṇḍava[2] or the region around Delhi as its southern half, Tūrghna or Srughna,[3] the region around the present site of Sugh near Jagadhari as its northern half and Pariṇat[4] or the country comprising the lower part of the Sarasvatī Dṛṣadvatī doab extending upto Vinaśana as its lower half. The Vedic Sarasvatī is to be identified with the present river Ghaggar[5] while the old bed of the Vedic Dṛṣadvatī is now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal.[6] The name Vinaśana was used for the desert areas around the well known Harappan site of Kalibangan where the Sarasvatī came to lose itself in the later Vedic age.[7]

This geographical definition of Kurukṣetra visualises it as the Vedi adopted by the gods for performing a sacrifice. The repeated occurrence in Vedic literature of references describing Kurukṣetra as a sacrificial altar of gods[8] gives an idea of the great sanctity attached to this region from the earliest times. Some of these references even name individual gods as undertaking sacrificial sessions here. The Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā,[9] for instance, speaks of a sacrifice performed in Kurukṣetra by gods generally and by Agni, Soma, Indra, Makha and Vāyu specifically. As a matter of fact the region was so closely associated with divinities that it was designated as Devayajana or the place selected by gods for performing sacrifices[10] and later its heartland, comprising the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab, came to be known as "the land fashioned by gods."[11]

Prajāpati, who held an important position in the Vedic Pantheon[12] and rose to be the chief of deities in the Brāhmaṇas,[13] is said to have adopted Kurukṣetra as the Uttaravedī of His sacrificial altar.[14] His intimate association with the land is evident from names like Brahmāvarta,[15] Brahmavedī.[16] Brahmakṣetra[17] and Brahmasara[18] later associated with this region. However, the links of Viṣṇu with this land are also equally remote even if in the beginning, apparently less intimate. Later works like the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa, which glorify Kurukṣetra, clearly reflect an increase in the popularity of Viṣṇu. This was the logical outcome of a process which had started in the Vedic age itself.

Actually Viṣṇu's rise to supremacy began very early. He is already presented in the Ṛgveda as a leader in battle[19] and his greatness is inconceivable.[20] He and Indra are looked upon as "Masters of the World."[21] He is called the germ of sacrifice,[22] innocuous and bountiful,[23] a generous protector[24] and the efficacious protector of the embryos.[25] Dandekar[26] believes that Viṣṇu must have been a highly worshipped god even in very ancient times and was deliberately shoved into the background in the Vedic religion on account of some intrinsic characteristics of his essential nature which might have been disagreeable to the Vedic religious ideology. His later emergence as supreme god was merely a legitimately recognised come back. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[27] we find Agni described as the lowest among the gods and Viṣṇu as the highest. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[28] and the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[29] speak of a sacrificial session held by the gods for the attainment of splendour, glory and food. They proposed to themselves that, he amongst them, who by his deeds reached the end of the sacrifice before the others, should attain the highest place among them all. Viṣṇu reaches the end before the others, and becomes the highest of the gods. Therefore, they say that Viṣṇu is the highest of the gods. Prof. Keith[30] is of the view that Viṣṇu's constant identification with sacrifice was the most important factor in his elevation to the rank of the highest god. It is to be noted that the venue of this sacrificial session at which Viṣṇu earned supremacy over all other gods was Kurukṣetra itself.

By the time of the Epics and the Purāṇas Viṣṇu's supremacy had already been established. He is equated with the ultimate Brahma in later Upaniṣads.[31] In Kurukṣetra a number of tīrthas like Kṛtaśauca,[32] Viṣṇupada,[33] Anaraka,[34] Viṣṇuloka,[35] Gokarṇa,[36] Koṭitīrtha,[37] Kulottāraṇa,[38] Satata[39] and Śālagrāma[40] are connected with his worship. The Vāmana Purāṇa[41] also gives a list of places of Vaiṣṇava affiliation which were centres of Bhāgavata worship and therefore sacred to Vāmana. V.S. Agrawala[42] calls these places Viṣṇupīṭhas on the anology of Śāktapīṭhas. More than a dozen of these spots are located in Kurukṣetra or Kuru Janapada which had a wider geographical connotation.[43] They include Mānasa,[44] Kauśikī,[45] Hastināpura, Kālindī, Varāhatīrtha,[46] Kurukṣetra, Kṛtaśauca,[47] Madhuvana,[48] Kurujāṅgala,[49] Śaravaṇa,[50] Plakṣivataraṇa,[51] Yamunātaṭa,[52] Triviṣṭapa[53] and Śaṅkukarṇa.[54] Evidently Viṣṇu worship was quite popular in the region. With

this background it would be interesting to trace the association of Viṣṇu's incarnations with Kurukṣetra.

It is not necessary for our purpose to make more than a passing reference to the doctrine of incarnation or its origin and development. According to a popular verse of Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā[55] an incarnation takes place "for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness from age to age." One or the other of these three situations can provide the raison d'etre for every incarnation. As to the origin of the doctrine, like much else in Hindu religion and philosophy, it has been traced to the Ṛgveda itself.[56] Reference is made in this regard to Viṣṇu's capacity to assume different forms and his taking three strides for the deliverance of mankind in distress.[57]

There are several categories of incarnations. The Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa[58] mentions five namely (i) Pūrṇa avatāra (ii) Aṁśāvatāra (iii) Kalāvatāra (iv) Kalaṁśāvatāra and (v) Vibhūti. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa[59] names three: Aṁśa, Kalā and Vibhūti. They are born of a part, aspect or grace etc. of Viṣṇu. Vyūha is another kind of manifestation noted in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa.[60] It is connected with creation or cosmological activities as against an Avatāra or Vibhava which is said to be concerned with Divine sport with the individual souls. The Avatāras vary in their number as well as order. They have been differently placed at six,[61] ten,[62] twelve,[63] sixteen,[64] twenty two,[65] twenty three[66] and finally said to be innumerable.[67] Hopkins[68] accepts only seven as original namely the Boar, Tortoise, Man-lion, Dwarf, Fish, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The number of ten however gained general acceptance and was already recognised in the Mahābhārata[69] in the following order; the Matsya or Fish, the Kūrma or Tortoise, the Varāha or Boar, the Nṛsiṁha or Man-lion, the Vāmana or Dwarf, Paraśurāma, Rāma Dāśarathi, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki. It received its popular sanction perhaps long before the end of the 12th century A.D. as the Daśāvatāra stotra in the Gītagovinda of Jayadeva shows.

We shall therefore adopt this list and take up each incarnation separately to ascertain the extent of his association with Kurukṣetra.

1. Matsya

Viṣṇu became a Fish to save Manu Vaivasvata, the progenitor of the human race, from the universal deluge.

The story of the Deluge of the Great Flood is known to most of the ancient civilisations of the world in one form or the other.[71] In Indian literature it first appears to be alluded to in the Atharvaveda which refers to a site called Nāvaprabhraṁśana or 'abandoning of the ship,' on a Himalayan peak where Manu Vaivasvata is supposed to have fastened the boat that saved him during the Great

Flood. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[72] presents the first clear Indian account of the Deluge in which Manu is fore-warned by a fish and then his boat steered to safety from the catastrophe that destroys all other beings. Here the site where he disembarks finds mention as Manoravasarpaṇa or 'Manu's descent' and is said to be located on the Uttaragiri or "Northern mountain" i.e. the Himalayas. At the time of the composition of Mahābhārata[73] it was known as "Naubandhana" or "the place of fastening of the ship."

The story occurs in the Purāṇas too. Here the Bhāgavata,[74] the Matsya[75] and the Agni[76] shift the scene of the Great Flood to the South. They however carry a much later and modified version which cannot get preference over older and more reliable texts. The Nīlamata Purāṇa[77] is more specific in naming Naubandhana as the mountain peak where Viṣṇu, in the form of Fish, tied the boat containing the seeds of all beings and describing it as the middle one of a group of three peaks, associated with Śiva and having to its north and south, peaks named after Brahmā and Viṣṇu respectively.[78] The three peaks lie to the west of Banahal. Naubandhana, with its height of 15,523 feet[79] is the westernmost and highest of them.[80]

This identification of Naubandhana is however, untenable for two reasons. First, most of the geographical names of Kashmir, as found in the Nīlamata Purāṇa have been borrowed from other parts of India. It has been rightly observed that the beautiful spots in Kashmir were named by visitors after the favourite tīrthas of their home states.[81] This is conclusively proved by the existence in Kashmir of names like Prayāga, Gaṅgā, Godāvarī, Puṣkara. Vasiṣṭhāśrama Bhṛgutuṅga, Pāṇḍavatīrtha, Mandākinī, Vaitaraṇī, Āpagā, Ṛṣikulya, Sarasvatī, Rāmahrada, Varāha tīrtha, Koṭi tīrtha and Cakra tīrtha etc. As a matter of fact, this has been acknowledged in the text of Nīlamata Purāṇa itself.[82] The source of much of the nomenclature given in the Nīlamata Purāṇa, which is a late work of the sixth or seventh century A.D.[83] is thus to be found outside Kashmir and Naubandhana is no exception.

Second, according to the Atharvaveda[84] Nāvaprabhraṁśana was situated on a peak of the Himalayas where the Kuṣṭha (Aucklindia Costus) and the Soma plants grew and the Aśvattha tree (Ficus Religiosa) was also found. This is not applicable in case of the mountain peak in Kashmir which is too high to permit growth or cultivation of these flora.[85]

Three, there is ample evidence in the Epics and the Purāṇas which places the scene of the Great Flood in the valley of the Vedic Sarasvatī and the mountains where its source lay.[86] The mountain peak that fits in this situation is now called Nahan where Kuṣṭha, Soma and Aśvattha could grow, as it is only about 3800 feet high.[87] It lies to the west of Gaṅgādvāra as described in the Kālika Purāṇa[88] and can be rightly called the Uttaragiri with Brahmāvarta, the valley of the

Sarasvatī and the heart of Kurukṣetra, also called the country of Manu, at its feet. Furthermore it meets the description in the Kulānta-pīṭha Māhātmya of a mountain called Bandhana as lying to south of Kulānta-pīṭha or Kullu. Finally, the present name Nahan can be explained most appropriately as a corruption of Naubandhana in its linguistic evolution through stages like Naubandhana-Nauandhana-Nadhana-Nahan.

The identification of Naubandhana with Nahan which, although a part of Himachal Pradesh now, was, in all probability, included in the northern portion of Kurukṣetra, convincingly associates the Matsya incarnation with Kurukṣetra.

This finds support from the Purāṇic texts. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa,[92] for instance, describes Viṣṇu as residing in the Kuru region in his Matsya incarnation. The Vāmana Purāṇa[93] specifically connects Matsya incarnation with the Mānasa lake. From the context where it is mentioned along with other places situated in Haryana the name Mānasa has to be taken as a corrupt form of the Ṛgvedic lake Mānuṣa which is coupled with the rivers Sarasvatī, Dṛṣadvatī and Āpayā or Āpagā.[94] It has been identified with the village and lake bearing the name Manas and lying about 8-10 kms. to the west of the town of Kaithal, old Kapiṣṭhala.[95]

2. Kurma

Kūrma or the Tortoise figures, in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,[96] in one of the early cosmogonic theories. Prajāpati the Creator broke open the Cosmic Egg and the juice which flowed from it became the Tortoise. Its lower shell is the earth, the curved upper shell the sky, and its body the atmosphere.[97] It is the vital element in the creative process, the very life-sap and therefore associated with the Creator Prajāpati. "Having assumed the form of a Tortoise, Prajāpati created offspring. That which He created, He made; Hence the word Kūrma. Kaśyapa means Tortoise, Hence men say, 'All Creatures are descendants of Kaśyapa.'"[98] In his Kūrma incarnation Prajāpati is thus said to have created all living beings.[99] Another purpose of the Kūrma incarnation was to aid in recovering some valuable articles lost in the Deluge. The Tortoise supported mount Mandara which was used by the gods and Asuras as a rod for churning the ocean (Samudra Manthana) with the help of the serpent Vāsuki who was used as a rope to turn it. The process threw up many invaluable objects including Amṛta and goddess Śrī.[100]

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa[101] says that in his eleventh incarnation, the Lord in the form of a Tortoise supported on his back the churning mountain, when the gods and Asuras were churning the ocean. In the Mahābhārata[102] too Viṣṇu describes Kūrma as his own incarnation to Nārada. The Matsya Purāṇa appears to suggest the priority of the Kūrma incarnation to Varāha when it says that while raising up the earth the Varāha placed one foot on the tortoise who was supporting

the earth and came up from Rasātala. It also ordains that the image of Varāha should have one foot on the Kūrma and the other on an elephant's forehead.[104]

Vāsuki, the lord of the Nāgas is connected with Kurukṣetra in the Purāṇas as well as in folk-tradition. According to Vāmana Purāṇa[105] Vāsuki was assigned for the protection of Kuru-Jāṅgala along with the Yakṣa called Candra, the Vidyādhara named Śaṅkukarṇa, the Rākṣasa lord Sukeśi, king Ajāvana and Agni Mahādeva while granting a boon to king Kuru. The Kūrma incarnation is also associated with river Kauśikī which is a tributary of the Dṛṣadvatī.[106] The Kauśikī-saṅgama or the confluence of the two streams has been located near village Balu about 25 kms. to the south of Thanesar.[107] Balu is one of the Harappan sites of Haryana.[108]

3. Varaha

Like the Matsya and the Kūrma the Varāha incarnation also rests on a creation myth of the Brāhmaṇas[109] and with the earlier two *avatāras* represents an intermediate state in the development of *avatāravāda*.[110]

The origin of this incarnation is also traced to an archaic cosmogonic or fertility myth like that of the storm god Rudra called "the Boar of heaven" in the Ṛgveda.[111] Some sort of Varāha story occurs in the Taittirīya,[112] Maitrāyaṇī[113] and Kāṭhaka Saṁhitās[114] almost on identical lines. The Taittirīya Saṁhitā however gives a second version which is more direct and easily intelligible than the one it shares with the other two. "It was all water in the beginning. In it Prajāpati moved in the form of air. He saw it (the earth submerged under water). He became the Boar and raised it.[115] The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[116] more specifically credits the Boar called Emūṣa, a form of Prajāpati, for raising the earth of which he is the lord. The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[117] describes the Boar lifting the earth as black and hundred-armed. There is an Upaniṣad named after Varāha.[118] However we would like to refer to the Rāmāyaṇa[119] which goes a step further saying that "All was water in the beginning. In the water earth was found. Then Brahmā the self-existent arose with the deities. He, becoming a Boar, raised up the earth and created the entire world." Here too the incarnation of Varāha has been attributed to Brahmā Prajāpati. Same is the case with the Vāyu Purāṇa.[120] But there does appear to be a nexus between Viṣṇu and Varāha also from some mantras of the Ṛgveda[121] although they are not clearly intelligible. In a reference of the lost Caraka Brāhmaṇa[122] Viṣṇu, not Prajāpati, is presented as personified sacrifice who brings Varāha in the form of a sacrifice for the gods. It might be remembered in this context that Kurukṣetra is the Uttaravedi of Prajāpati,[123] and Viṣṇu also, alongwith other gods, performed sacrifices here.[124] The land is known as Devayajana or "the place of divine worship."[125] This establishes a link between the Boar incarnation and Kurukṣetra.

A reference in the Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Saṁhitā[126] deserves to be mentioned particularly. "In the beginning there were primeval waters. Once Prajāpati, taking the form of a Boar entered it and brought up the soil exactly of the size of his snout, that soil became this very earth." The original home of the Kapiṣṭhalas was about the present town of Kaithal, situated 20° 48′ N by 76° 24′ E a few miles to the east of the Prāci-Sarasvatī in district Kurukṣetra.[127] Local tradition ascribes its foundation to Yudhiṣṭhira.[128] Its mention by Alberuni,[129] Varāhamihira,[130] Hieun-tsang[131] and in the Kāśikā[132] confirms its antiquity. Alberuni's notice is of particular interest in as much as it describes the inhabitants as fire worshippers, which means that fire rituals were still practiced here in the 11th century A.D. This is relevant in view of the Yajña and Varāha relationship.

The running Kalpa is named after Varāha as Varāha-Kalpa since this incarnation is supposed to have taken place at the time of the creation of the present world. The purpose in the raising of the earth by Varāha was the recovery of the lost Vedas which had been submerged in the waters by the demon Hiraṇyākṣa.[133] The spot where the earth was actually raised has been named in the Mahābhārata[134] as Lokoddhāra which is identified with the village named Loddhar near Jind.[135] Both Viṣṇu and Śiva are said to be ever present at this place. Another tīrtha, however, exists in the name of Varāha incarnation at the village called Barah, situated two miles to the east of village Bastali, a corrupt form of Vyāsasthalī near Jind.[136]

4. Nrsimha

The earliest reference to Nṛsiṁha or Man-lion as one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu occurs in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[137] where the legend of the death of demon Hiraṇyakaśipu at his hands is described. The objective was to save the demon's pious son Prahlāda whose life was threatened on account of his devotion to Viṣṇu.

Three later Upaniṣads Nṛsiṁha Pūrvatāpanī,[138] Nṛsiṁha Uttaratāpanī[139] and Nṛsiṁhaṣaṭcakra[140] are named after this incarnation. The story appears in the Mahābhārata[141] as well as the Purāṇas. The Vāmana Purāṇa[142] associates the event with the tīrtha named Kṛtaśauca which is traditionally located at village Barahban near Jind.[143] It also mentions another tīrtha named Anyajanmā to the east of Saraka.[144] At this spot took place a fight between Viṣṇu in the form of Nṛsiṁha and Śiva in the form of Śarabha. By the time of the later Upaniṣads, mentioned above, the cult of Nṛsiṁha worship had already developed to the extent of being divided into sub-sects which adopted Tāntric practices and sectarian mantras.[145] The Nārada Purāṇa[146] also describes Nṛsiṁha in various forms while explaining the mode of worship of Nṛhari with different kinds of mantras, diagrams and Tāntric practices.

It is interesting to note that the Asuras are often associated with Kurukṣetra.[147] The death of Vṛtra and Namuci at Indra's hand is said to have taken place near the Sarasvatī;[148] the Kārttikeya-Tāraka war took place in Kurukṣetra where Kārttikeya was appointed as commander of the forces of the gods and killed Bāṇāsura by smiting the Krauñca mountain;[149] Bali performed his sacrifice here[150] and the demons Sunda and Upasunda resided here after their world conquest.[151] Sārasvata, as one of the names of the Asuras is also indicative of their connection with the valley of the Sarasvatī.[152] Kurukṣetra would thus be the most appropriate land for appearance of Nṛsiṁha incarnation.

5. Vamana

Viṣṇu descended as Vāmana or Dwarf to deprive the demon Bali of the dominion of the three worlds in the Tretā Yuga.[153]

The origin of the legend of Vāmana incarnation can be traced to the Ṛgveda[154] where the three steps of Viṣṇu Trivikrama are mentioned. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[155] also specifically identifies Vāmana with Viṣṇu. So does the Śatapatha.[156] The fascinating story occurs at many places in later literature also and as a result of its popularity Vāmana came to be associated with several sites or regions. He has been connected with Gayā on the basis of a hill named Viṣṇupada in its neighbourhood.[157] The Rāmāyaṇa[158] places the hermitage of Vāmana near that of Viśvāmitra called Siddhāśrama which has been located near the junction of stream Thoras with the Gaṅgā. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa[159] connects it with Bhṛgu Kaccha on the Narmadā bank while the Skanda Purāṇa[160] places it at Gurukulya on the same river. Here the name of Bali's wife is given as Vindhyāvalī apparently in a later attempt to associate Vāmana with the south. The Agni Purāṇa,[161] on the other hand, mentions Gaṅgādvāra as the venue of Bali's sacrifice where Vāmana visited him. Gaṅgādvāra appears to be the same as the modern Haridvāra.

Despite these contradictory statements the claim of Kurukṣetra on its earliest association with Vāmana looks quite plausible. The Nīlamata Purāṇa[162] names the holy Viṣṇupada among the tīrthas of Kurukṣetra like Pṛthūdaka, Sthāneśvara and Cakra tīrtha. The Mahābhārata[163] also mentions Viṣṇupada immediately before river Beas and among the tīrthas of Kuruksetra, specifically with Vāmanaka which is obviously christened after Vāmana. There is a tīrtha named Gaṅgāhrada at village Kamoda near Thanesar[164] and Bali is said to have performed his sacrifice at Kurukṣetra where Vāmana came along with sage Bhāradvāja.[165] Here Prajāpati is said to have performed his initial sacrament[166] and river goddess Sarasvatī presented him with an Akṣamālā.[167]

The Padma Purāṇa[168] speaks of a Vāmanakṣetra in Kurukṣetra which was very dear to god Vāmana. The Vāmana Purāṇa[169] describes in detail the birth and sojourn of Vāmana in Kurujāṅgala. The installation of god Vāmana was performed

at Koṭi tīrtha by all the gods jointly.[170] Koṭi tirtha is well known as one of the Kurukṣetra tirthas. Again at the Vāmanaka tīrtha Viṣṇu, in the form of Vāmana is said to have restored to Indra his kingdom after snatching it from Bali.[171] Local tradition locates all the three tirthas Viṣṇupada, Vāmanaka and Koṭi tirtha at village Bolsam, seven miles to the south of Thanesar.[172] According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa,[173] after Bali had been deprived of life by Indra, he was restored by the Brāhmaṇas of the race of Bhṛgu who consecrated him for supreme dominion and celebrated for him a Viśvajit sacrifice. This sacrifice had the virtue of enabling him to conquer all his enemies. The Bhṛgus were originally connected with the land of Kurukṣetra.[174] It may also be recalled that the Asuras had been associated with the region of Kurukṣetra in very early times.[175]

As a matter of fact, the Vāmana incarnation is considered inseparable from Kurukṣetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa,[176] which ordains that Kurukṣetra should be remembered along with Vāmana.

6. Parasurama

In his incarnation of Paraśurāma Viṣṇu was born as the son of Jamadagni of the clan of Bhṛgus in the Tretā Yuga. He is said to have cleared the earth of tyrant kṣatriya kings twenty one times.[177]

The Bhṛgus were also called Ārcīkas or Ārjīkas after their legendary progenitor Ṛcīka.[178] According to the Ṛgveda the Ārjīkas pressed Soma juice with the Purus[179] who dwelt on the Sarasvatī.[180] The Mahābhārata[181] mentions a lake of Cyavana, another renowned Bhārgava, in Kurukṣetra and a hill called Ārcīka Parvata[182] which have been connected with the lake and hills of Śaryaṇāvat named in the Ṛgveda.[183] The Mahābhārata[184] locates Cyavana's hermitage on the Vadhūsarā river which has been identified with the Dohan[185] flowing near Narnaul, the headquarters of district Mahendragarh. A village called Dhosi near a small hill close to the town is still associated with the memory of Cyavana and has a temple dedicated to him.

A tīrtha named Rāmahrada after Paraśurāma exists about 17 kms. to the west of Jind[186] where the warrior god is said to have filled five lakes with the blood of exterminated kṣatriyas in order to gratify his fore-fathers.[187] In return he was granted a boon that his ascetic merit would again be increased, he would be freed of the sin of exterminating the kṣatriya race and his lakes would become tirthas celebrated all over the world.[188] The present name Ramrai of the tīrtha is obviously a corrupt form of Rāmahrada. At one time it was applied to Kurukṣetra generally which points to its importance.[189]

In view of the unbroken tradition connecting the Bhṛgus generally and Paraśurāma particularly with the valley of Dṛṣadvatī which ran close to Rāmahrada

and Jind, and much of whose old bed is now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal,[190] the claim of Kurukṣetra to being the land of Paraśurāma appears to be well-founded. The movement of the Bhṛgus towards the south and south-west[191] is undoubtedly a later phenomenon.

7. Rama

Viṣṇu's incarnation as Rāmacandra, the hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, son of King Daśaratha of Ayodhyā took place at the close of the Tretā Yuga to destroy the demon Rāvaṇa.[192]

According to a legend explaining the tīrtha-name Kapālamocana Rāma Dāśarathi once cut off the head of a wicked demon. Falling in a forest the head stuck to the shank of sage Rahodara after piercing his bone. The sage visited one tīrtha after another but failed to get rid of it till at last he came to the Auśanasa tirtha. As soon as he touched the water here the head fell off. The incident resulted in the naming of the tirtha as Kapāla-mocana.[194]

There is however, no evidence of any direct association of Rāmacandra with Kurukṣetra.

8. Krsna

The Kṛṣṇa incarnation took place at the end of the Dvāpara Yuga when Viṣṇu was born as the eighth son of Vasudeva and Devakī of the Lunar race for the destruction of the tyrant Kaṁsa, the representative of the principle of evil, corresponding to Rāvaṇa who was destroyed by the previous incarnation Rāma.[195]

Although Kṛṣṇa was not born in Kurukṣetra, his association with this land in later years is only too well known. The Mahābhārata[196] which is the epic of the Kurus and Kurukṣetra specifically describes him as Viṣṇu. His close relationship with the Pāṇḍavas and active participation in the Mahābhārata war in the beginning of which the sacred teachings of Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā were imparted to Arjuna are of course common knowledge. The Mahābhārata[197] also mentions the performance by Kṛṣṇa of a twelve year Satra on the bank of the Sarasvatī.

It would be no exaggeration to say that after outgrowing his childhood Kṛṣṇa remained in close touch with the land and people of Kurukṣetra throughout his life.

9. Buddha

Viṣṇu in his incarnation as Buddha, moved by deep compassion condemned the Vedic way that ordained animal slaughter in rites of sacrifice.[198] According to

another view however Viṣṇu assumed the form of the great sceptical philosopher, in the Kali or the current age, to delude the Daityas or demons into neglecting the worship of the gods and thus exposing them to destruction.[199]

Buddha's association with Kurukṣetra is restricted to his proselytizing activities. He undertook long and tiresome journeys in pursuance of his aim to reach the common man.[200] Although the heart of Madhya Deśa proper received more attention from him the ancient land of the Kurus was also not ignored and, as the Mahāvastu[201] states, the Buddha himself converted the people of Kuru Janapada.

The Bhaiṣajyavastu[202] in the Vinaya of the Mūla Sarvāstivādins, which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C., describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ānanda. The Buddha went from Hastināpura through Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmaṇagrāma and Kālanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhāra as far as Uḍḍiyāna and back.[203] Another town that finds mention in the same work is Bhadraṅkara, capital of the Janapada bearing identical name. Buddha's visit to this town is described in the Divyāvadāna[204] too. The Divyāvadāna[205] also mentions visits to Hastināpura and Srughna which apparently refer to journeys undertaken on different occasions.

Buddha's visits to the two Kuru towns of Ṭhullakoṭṭhita and Kammāsadamma have received special importance in Buddhist literature and find repeated mention in works like the Divyāvadāna,[206] the Avadānaśataka[207] and the Nikāyas.[208] At least two villages visited by Buddha, both named Thūṇā, have been described as Brāhmaṇagrāmas in several works apart from the Vinaya but it is possible to differentiate between them since one is located in the Malla Janapada and the other on the western boundary of Majjhimadeśa.[209] The Master's visits to the Uttarakurus[210] refer to the region generally while a journey to a Kauravya town is also mentioned without specifically naming[211] it. This Kauravya town is most probably Indapatta where a Kauravya dynasty of Yudhiṣṭhira gotra is said to have been ruling.

The Buddha thus visited at least nine towns in the Kurus[212] out of which Hastināpura and Rohitaka (present Rohtak) are well known. Of the rest, Mahānagara appears to refer to Indraprastha while Srughna has been identified with the present site of Sugh near Jagadhari. The Brāhmaṇagrāma of the Vinaya, most probably identical with the town named Thūṇā located on the western boundary of the Madhya Deśa in the Mahāvagga and the Divyāvadāna has been equated with the present town of Tohana which is mentioned by Pāṇini as Tauṣayaṇa.[213] Kālanagara refers to a present town of Kalanaur situated 32°0′ N and 75°10′ E 12 miles west of Rohtak on the road to Bhiwani. The name Bhadraṅkara survives in the name Bhakra, of the town near which the prestigious Bhakra dam stands. Ṭhullakoṭṭhita has been equated with the twin village of Tholkurdi, 30°10′N and

76°40'E on the road leading from Ambala city to Thanesar-Kurukṣetra via Jhansa. And Kammāsadamma, probably the corrupt form of Sanskrit Kalmāṣadhāma has been identified with village Kamoda situated 29°55'N and 76°40'E about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Pehowa, not far from the Prāci-Sarasvatı river. Apart from these towns the Buddha's journeys to Uttara-Kurus also probably led him through the northern portion of Kurukṣetra.

The Buddha thus made a determined attempt towards the propagation of the Faith in this region. Although his efforts failed to produce any mass movement and resulted only in sporadic conversions here and there leading to the setting up of stray monastaries in a few prominent towns, there is sufficient evidence to establish a prolonged association of the Buddha with the land of Kurukṣetra.

10. Kalki

The tenth incarnation of Kalki is yet to take place.

Out of the nine past incarnations of Viṣṇu, only one, Rāma Dāśarathi, is not directly associated with Kurukṣetra. Two, namely Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, are actively associated with this land through their activities, the former by virtue of his family relationship with the Pāṇḍava branch of the Kuru clan, involvement in contemporary politics and participation in the Mahābhārata battle and the latter in pursuance of propagation of his teachings. The remaining six, Paraśurāma, Vāmana, Nṛsiṁha, Varāha, Kūrma and Matsya can be said to belong to Kurukṣetra on the basis of available evidence. The clan of Paraśurāma, the Bhṛgus lived in Kurukṣetra before moving towards the south and south west of the country. The scene of the exploits of Vāmana and Nṛsiṁha too was this very region and it is connected in literature with the demons too.

The first three, the Boar, the Tortoise and the Fish are described as incarnations of Prajāpati in Vedic literature and even some later works.[214] The association of Prajāpati Brahmā with Kurukṣetra has already been brought out above. It would be relevant to note, here that most of the contents of the Saṁhitās and early Brāhmaṇa works were composed in Kurukṣetra and refer to events and episodes which should logically be taken to relate to this region. Viṣṇu's own early association with Kurukṣetra has been brought out above. He replaces Prajāpati in later literature even in case of the first three incarnations. He is further associated or identified not only with Śiva or Mahādeva but with Rāma in the Rāmāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa in the Mahābhārata.[215]

It may be observed in conclusion that the association of Viṣṇu's incarnations with Kurukṣetra supports the traditional position of this land as the cradle of Indian culture and civilisation.

Notes and References

1. Ed. Mahadeva Śāstri and Rangacarya, Delhi 1985, VIII. 1.1.
2. Name of the forest near Yamunā burnt by Agni with the help of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. The Pāṇḍava capital Khāṇḍavaprastha, also known as Indraprastha was located in it. The ruins of the old site in Delhi area near Purānā Qilā are now known as Indarpat. Cf. Nando Lal Dey, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, 3rd ed. New Delhi 1971, p. 77 f.
3. For identification see. Kane, P.V., History of the Dharmaśāstra, Pune, 1973, Vol. IV, p. 681.
4. Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Calcutta, 1924, p. 395 f.
5. See, O.P. Bharadwaj, Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 23, and O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1987, pp. 38-58.
6. O.P. Bharadwaj, The Rgvedic Dṛṣadvatī, Studies in Indology (Prof. R.V. Joshi Felicitation Volume), Delhi 1988-89, pp. 141-156.
7. Studies, pp. 20-43.
8. Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā II.1.4; IV 5.9; Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, II. 300; III. 126; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, IV.1.5.13; XIV. 1.1.2; Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, II. 25.13.3; Jābālopaniṣad i and Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, VIII 1.1. etc.
9. ii. 1.4:

 देवा वै सत्रमासत कुरुक्षेत्रे अग्निः सोमा इन्द्रस्तेऽब्रुवन्, यतमं नः प्रथमं यश ऋच्छात्तं नः सहेति, तेषां वै सोमं यश आर्छत्, तमभिसमगच्छन्त तस्मात्सोममभिसंगच्छन्ते ।

10. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB), XIV. 1.1.2:

 देवा ह वै सत्रं निषेदुः । अग्निरिन्द्रः सोमो मरवो विष्णुष्विश्वेदेवाऽन्यत्र वाश्विभ्याम् । तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनमास । तस्मादाहुः कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनमिति । तस्माद् यत्र क्व च कुरुक्षेत्रस्य निगच्छति तदेवमन्यतऽ-इदम् देवयजनमिति तद्धि देवानां देवयजनम् ।

11. Manusmṛti, II. 17;

 सरस्वतो दृषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् ।
 तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्त्तं प्रचक्षते ॥

12. A.A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, Reprint, New Delhi 1971, p. 118.
13. *Ibid.* Also Ś.B. xiii. 1.8.2.

14. Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, ii. 25.13.3:

 ते देवा अब्रुवन्नेतावती वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदिर्यावत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम् ।

15. See Manusmṛti, II. 17 quoted in n. 11 supra.
16. Vāmana P. Cr. Ed., Varanasi 1967, SM, 1.13.
17. Mahābhārata, B.O.R.I. Pune Cr. Ed., Vana, 81.4.
18. Vāmana P. SM, 11.24:

 आद्यं ब्रह्मसरः पुण्यं ततो रामह्रदः स्मृतः ।
 कुरुणा कृषिणा कृष्टं कुरुक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम् ॥

 Also SM, 28.38.

19. i. 156.3.
20. vii. 100. 5-6.
21. vi. 69. and vii. 99.
22. i. 156.3.
23. viii. 25.12.
24. i. 155.4.
25. x. 184.1.
26. Vedic Mythological Tracts, Delhi 1979, pp. 81 and 89.
27. i. 1:

 अग्निर्वै देवानाम् अवमो । विष्णुः परमः ।

28. xiv. 1. 1-5.
29. viii. 1.1.
30. The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads, Two Vols. Reprint, Delhi 1970, Vol. I, pp. 110-111.
31. Gopīcandanopaniṣad, pt. ii, p. 67:

 कश्च विष्णुः परं ब्रह्मैव विष्णुः ।

32. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.17 and Vāmana P. SM, 13.22.
33. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.87 and Vāmana P. SM, 10. 82-84 and 15.66.
34. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.146 and Vāmana P. SM, 20. 24-25.
35. Mbh. Gita Press ed., Vana 81.9 and Vāmana P. 59. 117-119.
36. Vāmana P. SM, 13.47.
37. Vāmana P. SM, 13.14.
38. Mbh. Gita Press ed., Vana, 81.88 and Vāmana P. SM, 15. 74-76.
39. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81. 8-9.
40. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 82.106. and Vāmana P. 59.60 ff and 117.
41. Cr. ed. 63.1 ff.
42. Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 176-178.

43. It included Kurukṣetra and the tract between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā and had Hastināpura as its capital city.
44. Same as Mānuṣa, See infra.
45. A tributary of the Dṛṣadvatī. According to Cunningham, Kauśikīsaṅgama is near village Balu on the Rakshi river 17 miles to the south of Thanesar. See Arch. Survey Reports, Reprint. Vol. XIV p. 88.
46. At Vil. Barah in district Jind. See infra.
47. See n. 32 supra.
48. One of the seven forests of Kurukṣetra. Vāmana P. SM, 13.5; 57.31.
49. V.S. Agrawal erroneously equates Kurujāṅgala with the Rohtak-Hansi-Hissar tract of Haryana. B.C. Law (Historical Geography of Ancient India, New Delhi 1984, pp. 40 and 101) also mistakes it for a wild region. So do others like M.R. Singh (Geographical Data in the Early Purāṇas, Calcutta 1972, p. 68-69) and Wilson (The Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Eng. tr. and notes, Calcutta 1972, pp. 151 and 158, n. 98.). Actually Jāṅgala in the name Kurujāṅgala denotes a particular kind of soil known for its fertility and richness in production of fruit and grains. See Bhāvaprakāśa quoted in Vācaspatyam p. 3084:

 सुस्वादु फलवान् देशो वातलो जांगलः स्मृतः ।

 Manusmṛti VII, 69, recommends residence in Jāṅgala country:

 जांगलं सस्यसम्पन्नमार्यप्रायमनाविलम् ।
 रम्यमानतसामन्तं स्वाजीव्यं देशमावसेत् ॥

 Kullūka in his gloss on this verse quotes:

 अल्पोदक तृणो यस्तु प्रवातः प्रचुरातपः ।
 स ज्ञेयो जांगलो देशो बहुधान्यादि संयुतः ॥

 Kurujāṅgala has been often used in the Mbh. and the Purāṇas as another name of the Kurukṣetra or Kuru land. From references in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mbh. it appears to have denoted the north-eastern strip of the Kuru country. See O.P. Bharadwaj, Studies, p. 90, Also cf. M.R. Singh as already cited.
50. See Mbh. Cr. ed., Anuśāsana, 84.75:

 स तु गर्भो महातेजा गाङ्गेयः पावकोद्भवः ।
 दिव्यं शरवणं प्राप्य ववृधेऽद्भुतदर्शनः ॥

 The forest is also connected with the birth of Skanda Kārttikeya. It is located in Saraka tirtha at village Shergarh near Kaithal. Vide Kalyāṇa, Vol. 31, No. 1, Jan. 1957, p. 85. More probably it was situated in the northern part of Kurukṣetra. See Vāmana P. 31, 15-38.

51. A tīrtha on the right bank of the Yamunā in its upper reaches, probably somewhere near the present town of Paonta in Himachal Pradesh on the Nahan-Dehra Dun Road. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 129, 13:

 एतत्प्लक्षावतरणं यमुनातीर्थमुच्यते ।
 एतद्वै नाकपृष्ठस्य द्वारमाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥

52. Apparently the right bank of the Yamunā, touching Kurukṣetra.
53. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.70, same verse in Vāmana P.S.M. 15.41; Identified with village Theontha by M.L. Bhargava, The Geography of Ṛgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 67.
54. Vāmana, P, 23.40: Name of a Vidyādhara assigned for protection of Kurukṣetra by Viṣṇu.
55. Mbh. Cr. ed. Bhīṣma, 26.8:

 परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
 धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

56. Margaret and James Stutley, A Dictionary of Hinduism, New Delhi 1986, p. 32 q, v., Also J.N. Banerjea, Purāṇic and Tāntric Religion, Calcutta 1966, p. 45.
57. R.N. Dandekar, *op. cit.*, p. 80 f.
58. A.J. Rawal, Indian Society, Religion and Mythology (A Study of the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Delhi 1982, p. 143.
59. ii. 6. 41-46.
60. T.S. Rukmani, A Critical Study of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Varanasi 1970, p. 210 f.
61. R.G. Bhandarkar, Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems, Pune 1982, p. 59.
62. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Śānti; 348. 2; Vāyu P. 98.63 ff; etc.
63. Vāyu P. 97.72 ff.
64. Bhāgavata P. XI. 4.3 ff.
65. *Ibid.*, i. 3. 6-22.
66. *Ibid.*, ii. 7.1 ff.
67. *Ibid.*, i. 3.26 (i):

 अवताराः ह्यसंख्येयाः हरेः सत्त्वनिधेर्द्विजाः ।

 Also Harivaṁśa P. 1.41.11, and Brahma P. 213.17 which give the number in thousands.
68. Epic Mythology, Delhi 1968, p. 211.
69. Gita Press ed. Śānti, 348.2:

 मत्स्यः कूर्मो वराहश्च नरसिंहोऽथ वामनः ।
 रामो रामश्च रामश्च बुद्धः कल्कीति ते दश ॥

70. Ed. with English tr. Barbara Stoler Miller, Delhi 1984, Intro. pp. 4-6 and verses 5-16.
71. See Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Ed. James Hastings, Edinburgh 1974, Vol. iv, pp. 545-557.
71a. J. Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts, 2nd ed. Amsterdam 1967, Vol. 1, pp. 181-220.
71b. XIX, 39.8.
72. i. 8.1.
73. Cr. Ed., Vana, 185.47:

 तच्च नौबन्धनं नाम शृंङ्गं हिमवतः परम् ।
 ख्यातमद्यापि कौन्तेय तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥

74. Gita Press Ed. viii. 24. 10-11.
75. Anandashram Ed. Chs. 1-2. Also Muir, *op. cit.*, p. 203 ff.
76. Ed. Bala Upadhyayadeva, Varanasi 1986, Ch. 2 and Muir, *op. cit.*, p. 211 f.
77. Ed. K. De. Vreese, Leiden 1936; Ved Kumari, Jammu 1968, (Vol. ii, Text with Eng. tr.).
78. Verses 40-41, 164 and 178.
79. M.A. Stein, Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī, Reprint Delhi 1979, Vol. ii, pp. 389-393.
80. Ved Kumari, *op. cit.*, Vol. i, pp. 24-25.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
82. Verse 126:

 नानादेशसमुत्थैस्तु ततः प्रभृति मानवैः ।
 षण्मासान् वसते देशः षण्मासान् पिशिताशनैः ॥

83. Ved Kumari, *op. cit.*, Vol. i. p. 15; Buhler cited by Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 377.
84. xix. 39.8:

 यत्र नावप्रभ्रंशनं यत्र हिमवतः शिरः ।
 तत्रामृतस्य चक्षणं तत्र कुष्ठोऽजायत ।
 स कुष्ठो विश्वभेषजः साकं सोमेन तिष्ठति ॥

 and 6: अश्वत्थो देवसदनस्तृतोयस्यामितो दिवि ।

 Also V. 4.3.
85. Studies, p. 3.
86. For a detailed discussion see Studies, pp. 20-43; and O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1987, pp. 38-58.
87. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1908, Vol. xviii, p. 321.
88. 32 34:

 विशालां बदरीं यातो गंगाद्वारान्तिकं खलु ।
 तत्र गत्वा जगद्धर्ता मनुः स्वायंभुवः स्वयम् ॥

33.61(i):

ततो जलप्लवे जाते विध्वस्ते भुवनत्रये।

33.68:

ततः शनैः शनैस्तोये शोषं गच्छति वै चिरात्।
पश्चिमं हिमवच्छृङ्गं सुमग्नं तोयमध्यतः॥

89. Bhāgavata P. iv. 19.1:

अथादीक्षत राजा तु हयमेधशतेन सः।
ब्रह्मावर्ते मनोः क्षेत्रे यत्र प्राची सरस्वती॥

90. Hiranand, Arch. Sur. Rep. 1907-8, p. 264 cited by K.K. Dasgupta, A Tribal History of Ancient India, Calcutta 1974, p. 76 ff.

91. The region of Srughna described as the northern half of Kurukṣetra in the Tai. Ār. viii. 1.1. covered, undoubtedly, extensive areas of the neighbouring Shiwalik hills.

92. ii. 2.51:

मत्स्यरूपश्च गोविन्दः कुरुष्वास्ते जनार्दनः।
विश्वरूपेण सर्वत्र सर्वः सर्वत्रगो हरिः॥

93. 63.1:

आद्यं मात्स्यं महद्रूपं संस्थितं मानसे ह्रदे।

94. RV, iii. 23.4:

नि त्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम्।
दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि॥

95. M.L. Bhargava, The Geography of Ṛgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 55.
96. Ś.B. vi. 1.1.12 and vii. 5.1.1.
97. Ś.B. vii. 5.1.2.
98. Ś.B. vii. 5.1.5:

स यत्कूर्मो नाम। एतद्वै रूपं कृत्वा प्रजापतिः प्रजाः असृजत। यदसृजत अकरोत् तत्, यदकरोत्तस्मात् कूर्मः। कश्यपो वै कूर्मः। तस्मादाहुः सर्वाः प्रजाः काश्यप्य इति।

99. Ś.B. vii. 5.1.7:

प्राणो वै कूर्मः प्राणो हीमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः करोति।

100. For the story of Samudramanthana see Mbh. Ādi. Ch. 18. Also Muir *op. cit.*, Vol. iv. p. 27.
101. i. 3.16.

102. Gita Press ed. Śānti, 339. verse immediately preceding 77

द्वितीयं कूर्मरूपं मे हेमकूटनिभं सुत ॥
मन्दरं धारयिष्यामि अमृतार्थे द्विजोत्तम ।
मग्नां महार्णवे घोरे भाराक्रान्तामिमं पुनः ॥

103. 246.75:

कूर्मपृष्ठे पदं न्यस्य निश्चक्राम रसातलात् ।

104. 259.30:

कूर्मोपरि तथा पादमेकं नागेन्द्रमूर्धनि ।
संस्तूयमानो लोकेशैः समन्तात् परिकल्पयेत् ॥

105. 23. 39-40:

तस्य क्षेत्रस्य रक्षार्थं ददौ स पुरुषोत्तमः ।
यक्षं च चन्द्रनामानं वासुकिं चापि पन्नगम् ।
विद्याधरं शङ्कुकर्णं सुकेशिं राक्षसेश्वरम् ।
अजावनं च नृपतिं महादेवं च पावकम् ॥

106. *Ibid.*, 63.2:

कौर्ममन्यत्सन्निधानं कौशिक्यां पापनाशनम् ।

107. Cunningham, Arch. Sur. Rep. XIV. (1878-79), p. 88.

108. An Encyclopaedia of Indian Archaeology. Two Vols. Ed. A. Ghosh, New Delhi 1989. Vol. ii, p. 44.

109. Margaret and James Stutley, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

110. *Ibid.*

111. i. 114.5:

दिवो वराहमरुषं कपर्दिनं ।

Also see Margaret and James Stutley, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

112. vi. 3.4.2.

113. iii. 8.1.

114. 25.2.

115. vii. 1. 5-1.

116. xiv. 1.2.11:

इयती वा इयमग्रे पृथिवी आस प्रादेशमात्री । ताम् एमूष इति वराह उज्जघान । सः अस्याः पतिः प्रजापतिः ।

117. i. 10.8:

उद्धतासि वराहेण कृष्णेन शतबाहुना ।

This verse occurs in the Mahānārāyaṇi Upaniṣad (4.5) and the Padma Purāṇa (Sṛṣṭi, 20.156.) also.

118. Upaniṣatsaṅgrahaḥ, Ed. J.L. Shastri, Delhi 1970, Prt. i, No. 102, pp. 603-615.
119. Chowkhamba ed. Ayodhyā, 110.3:

सर्वं सलिलमेवासीत् पृथिवी सलिलनिर्मिता ।
ततः समभवद्ब्रह्मा स्वयंभूः दैवतैः सह ॥
स वराहस्ततो भूत्वा प्रोज्जहार वसुन्धराम् ।

Also see Muir, *op. cit.*, Vol. iv, pp. 33, 36 and 37.

120. 6. 1-15.
121. See e.g. i. 61.7; viii, 77.10; and X, 99.6.
122. Quoted by Sāyaṇa on RV viii. 77.10:

विष्णुर्यज्ञः । स देवेभ्य आत्मानमन्तर्धात् । तमन्यदेवता नाविन्दन् इन्द्रस्त्ववेत् । स इन्द्रमब्रवीत् को भवानिति । तमिन्द्रः प्रत्यब्रवीत् अहं दुर्गाणामसुराणां च हन्ता । भवांस्तुकः ? इति । सः अब्रवोत् अहं दुर्गादाहर्ता, त्वं तु यदि दुर्गाणामसुराणां हन्ता ततः अयं वराहो वाममुषः एकविंशत्याः पुराम् पारेऽश्ममयीनां वसति तस्मिन्नसुराणां वसु वाममस्ति तमिमं जहीति । तस्येन्द्रस्ताः पुरो भित्त्वा हृदयमविध्यत् । अधि तत्र यदासोत्तद्विष्णुराहरत् इति ।

123. Mbh. Cr. ed., Śalya, 52.20. and Vāmana P., SM, 1.14. For Kurukṣetra as Prajāpati's Vedi see Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, XXV. 13.3:

· · · · ते देवा अब्रुवन्नेतावतो वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदिर्यावत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम् ।

124. N. 10. supra.
125. *Ibid.* Also Jaimintya Br. ii. 300:

...एतद्वै देवानां देवयजनं यत् (कुरु)क्षेत्रं; देवानामेव तत् देवयजनेन यन्ति...

And Jābālopaniṣad, 1.

126. vi. 7:

· · · आपो वा इदमासन् । सलिलमेव स प्रजापतिर्वराहो भूत्वोपन्यमज्जत् । तस्य यावन्मुखमासीत्तावतीं मृदमुदहरत् । सेयमभवत् ।

127. Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha-Saṁhitā, Ed. Raghu Vira, Lahore 1932, Intro. p. 1 f.
128. *Ibid.*, Intro. p. 2.
129. Alberuni's India, ed. Sachau, Two Vols. in one, Reprint, Delhi 1964, p. 206. The name is spelt as Kavital.
130. Bṛhat-Saṁhitā XIV, 4; Also see Ajay Mitra Shastri, India as seen in the Bṛhatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihira, Delhi 1969, p. 110.
131. On Pāṇini viii, 3.91:

· · · · · · कपेः स्थलं कपिस्थलम् ।

132. Raghu Vira, *op. cit.*, Intro. p. 2.
133. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Sabhā, 38.29 ff.
134. Vana, 81. 36-37.
135. Situated about 18 kms. east of Narwana—B.K. Muztar, Kurukṣetra: Political and Cultural History, Delhi 1978, p. 114.
136. Vana, 81.15. and Vāmana P. SM, 13.32 and 79.5.
For location see Muztar, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
137. X. 1.7:

वज्रनखाय विद्महे तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्राय धीमहि ।
तन्नो नारसिंहः प्रचोदयात् ॥

138. Upaniṣatsaṅgrahaḥ, Prt. i., No. 28, pp. 218-226.
139. *Ibid.*, Prt. i, No. 29, pp. 227-235.
140. *Ibid.*, Prt. ii. No. 28, pp. 84-85.
141. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Vana, 272. 56-60; Viṣṇu P. i. Chs. 19 and 20; Matsya P. Chs. 160-162. etc.
142. 63.5:

कृतशौचे नृसिंहं च ····।

143. Kurukṣetra Rahasya (Hindi), Jind V.S. 1988, p. 30.
144. 15. 28-29.
145. K. Damodar, Nārada Purāṇa A Critical Study.
146. Prt. i. Ch. 71.
147. For a detailed discussion on this point see Studies p. 232 ff.
148. *Ibid.*
149. Mbh. Cr. ed. Śalya 45.79. Also see O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvatī, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
150. Vāmana P. 62.1:

गतेऽथ तीर्थयात्रायाम् प्रह्लादे दानवेश्वरे ।
कुरुक्षेत्रं समभ्यागात् यष्टुं वैरोचनो बलिः ॥

151. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 209.27:

एवं सर्वा दिशो दैत्यो जित्वा क्रूरेण कर्मणा ।
निः सपत्नो कुरुक्षेत्र निवेशमभिचक्रतुः ॥

152. Rangeya Raghava, Prācīna Bhāratiya Paramparā Aura Itihāsa, Delhi 1953, p. 169.
153. For the story in detail, Vāmana P. SM, Chs. 2-10.
154. i. 22.17:

इदं विष्णुर्विचक्रमे त्रेधा निदधे पदम् । ·····

repeated as YV, v. 15 and xxxiv. 43; AV, 7.26.5 and SV, 2.10.20 etc. and other RV references like i. 154.3 and i. 155.4.

155. ii. 1.3 and ii. 4.12 etc.
155a. vi. 3.7.
156. i. 1.2.13; i. 9.3.9; iii. 6.3.3 etc.
157. P.V. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 645 f.
158. Bāla, 29. 2-9.
159. viii. 18.21.
160. Māheśvara Khaṇḍa, i. 18.153.
161. 4.7.
162. P. 13. verse 131.
163. Cr. ed. Vana, 130.8.
164. Cunningham, A.S.R. Vol. xiv, p. 100.
165. Vāmana P. 62.52:

ब्रह्मन् व्रजामि देह्याज्ञां कुरुक्षेत्रं महोदयम् ।
तत्र दैत्यपतेः पुण्यो हयमेधः प्रवर्तते ॥

and 63. 47-48.
166. Ganga Sagar Rai, Vāmana Legend in the Vedas, Epics and Purāṇas, Purāṇa, xii, No. 1, Jan. 1970 pp. 102-140.
167. *Ibid.*
168. *Ibid.*, Also Matsya P. Gita Press ed. ii. 244. 5-6.
169. SM., 2.2:

शृणुध्वं मुनयः प्रीताः वामनस्य महात्मनः ।
उत्पत्तिं च प्रभावं च निवासं कुरुजांगले ॥

170. SM., 13.30(i):

तत्रैव वामनो देवः सर्वदेवैः प्रतिष्ठितः । · · ·

171. *Ibid.*, 15.64 (ii)—65:

ततो वामनकं गच्छेत् त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतम् ॥
यत्र वामनरूपेण विष्णुनाप्रभविष्णुना ।
बलेरपहृतं राज्यम् इन्द्राय प्रतिपादितम् ॥

172. A.S.R., Vol. XIV, p. 99. Where the name is spelt as Burasyam. Also V.S. Agrawala. *op. cit.*, App. i, p. 188. For enumeration of these tirtha names, Vāmana P. 15. 63-66; Padma P. 26.96 and Mbh. Vana, 83.103.
173. viii, 15.3 ff.
174. See infra.
175. See pp. 147-152 supra.
176. SM., 15.78:

दूरस्थोऽपि स्मरेद्यस्तु कुरुक्षेत्रं सवामनम् ।
सोऽपि मुक्तिमवाप्नोति किं पुनर्निवसन्नरः ॥

177. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Ādi, 2. 1-12 and 64.4.
178. Descendant of Cyavana and father of Jamadagni whose son was Bhārgava Paraśurāma. See P.L. Bhargava, India in the Vedic Age, Lucknow 1956, p. 71.
179. For Contiguous location of the Ārjikas, Pañcajanas and Śaryaṇāvat etc. see Studies, p. 209 f.
180. vii. 96.2., also Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 12.
181. Cr. ed., Vana, 125, 11-12.
182. *Ibid.*, Vana, 125.13. It is said to be beyond the Saindhava forest.
183. M.L. Bhargava, *op. cit.*, p. 20-23. Contrary to the view of P.L. Bhargava, he erroneously locates them in Kashmir.
184. Cr. ed., Ādi, 6.7:

नाम तस्यास्तदा नद्याश्चक्रे लोकपितामहः ।
वधूसरेति भगवांश्च्यवनस्याश्रमं प्रति ॥

185. P.L. Bhargava, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
186. Cf. S.S. Parui, Kurukṣetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa, Calcutta 1946, p. 76.
187. Vāmana P. SM., 14. 1-3.
188. *Ibid.*, 14.9.11.
189. Vāmana P. SM., 1.13:

आद्यैषा ब्रह्मणो वेदिस्ततो रामह्रदः स्मृतः ।
कुरुणा च यतः कृष्टं कुरुक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम् ॥

190. See The Ṛgvedic Dṛṣadvatī, cited above.
191. Jayanti Panda, Bhṛgus—A Study, New Delhi 1984, p. 173.
192. Monier Williams, Indian Wisdom, London, p. 332 and Gītagovinda, p. 130. verse 11. For tr. *ibid.*, p. 70.
193. Vāmana P. SM., 18. 3-13.
194. Parui, *op. cit.*, p. 96. V.S. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
195. Monier Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 332 f.
196. Cr. ed. Udyoga, 22.31(i):

· · · · · · सनातनो वृष्णिवीरश्च विष्णुः । · · · ·

197. Gita Press Ed. Vana, 12.14:

अवकृष्टोत्तरासंगः कृशोधमनिसंततः ।
आसीः कृष्णः सरस्वत्यां सत्रे द्वादशवार्षिके ॥

198. Gītagovinda, p. 131, verse, 13. For tr. *ibid.*, p. 71.
199. Monier Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 335.
200. For details see B.S. Upadhyaya, Buddhakālīna Bhāratiya Bhūgola, Prayag, V.S. 2018, p. 90 ff. And O.P. Bharadwaj, Gautama Buddha in Kurukṣetra, Studies pp. 149-165.

201. Calcutta ed. Vol. ii, p. 564; Also L.M. Joshi and Fauja Singh, History of the Panjab, Vol. i, Patiala 1976, p. 193.
202. M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Calcutta 1933, Vol. ii, p. 232. According to G.S.P. Misra its Chinese and Tibetan translations do not go beyond the 5th century A.D. See the Age of the Vinaya, Delhi 1972, p. 7.
203. E. Frauwallner, The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature, Roma 1956, pp. 31-32.
204. p. 77 ff.
205. Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, p. 293 ff. Sudhana Kumārāvadāna and p. 45 ff. Stutibrāhmaṇāvadāna.
205a. p. 47 ff. Indra nāmabrāhmaṇāvadāna.
206. p. 446 ff, Mākandikāvadāna.
207. Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1958, p. 227, No. 90, Rāṣṭrapālāvadāna.
208. Majjhima Nikāya, 2.4.2; Aṅguttara Nikāya (Nidāna Sutta), Dīgha Nikāya, 2.2 etc.
209. Studies, p. 153-155.
210. B.S. Upadhyaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 68 and 88.
211. Studies, p. 152.
212. For identification of these towns see Studies, pp. 152-160.
213. V.S. Agrawala, India as known to Pāṇini, 2nd ed. Varanasi 1952, p. 74.
214. See e.g. Viṣṇu P. i. 4. 1-10. Particularly verses 7(ii) and 8.

अनुमानात्तदुद्धारं कर्तुकामः प्रजापतिः ॥
अकरोत् स्वतनूमन्यां कल्पादिषु यथा पुरा ।
मत्स्यकूर्मादिकां तद्वद् वाराहं वपुरास्थितः ॥

215. Muir, *op. cit.*, Vol. iv, Ch. II, Sec. 5, p. 182 and passim.

7

IS THERE KURUKṢETRA-KUTSANA IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA ?

On the death of Droṇācārya in the great Bhārata war Karṇa accepts the command of the Kaurava forces and Śalya, the king of Madras[1] and maternal uncle of the Pāṇḍavas, agrees to be his charioteer. A fit of self-glorification by Karṇa[2] is countered by Śalya with deprecation of his prowess and praise of Arjuna.[3] This provokes a bitter argument in the course of which Karṇa condemns the social, moral and ethical conduct of the Madras in the most derogatory terms.[4] In the process the whole Vāhika land of five rivers, of which the Madras formed a part, receives severely censorious strictures at the hands of Karṇa and gets branded as the scum of the earth.[5]

In his address as General President of the 22nd session of the All India Oriental Conference[6] the late learned Prof. V.S. Agrawal rightly observed that this diatribe against the Madras and their people entitled 'Madraka-Kutsana' in the Epic colophons was in reality directed against many social customs, introduced by the Indo-Greeks or Yavanas after they took possession of the Madras, which were considered reprehensible when compared with the orthodox Indian social code.

In a detailed three volume study in Hindi[7] Prof. Agrawala finds in the Great Epic similar denegration of Kurukṣetra. He declares[8] that "Kurukṣetra was a part of that Vāhika country where the Greek rulers of Vāhlika had over-run the Madras and the centre of Śākala and completely disturbed the traditional Ārya social conduct..... As a result the most sacred land of Kurukṣetra came to be regarded

as forbidden to the Āryas. People still went there but only to pay formal visits to tīrthas while in their mind they believed in:

आरट्टा नाम वाह्लीका (वाहीका) न तेष्वार्यो द्वयहं वसेत् ॥

(Karṇa 30, 43)

The Āratta land is full of the Yavanas of Vāhlika and an Ārya should not stay there for the second day. The same thing is conveyed to the pilgrim through Ulūkhalamekhalā Yakṣī of Kurukṣetra. "After passing a day in Kurukṣetra do not stay for the second night. Otherwise you will find the behaviour entirely opposite to what happens during the day." (Vana, 129.10).

Later in the book[9] he again remarks: "It has been declared (in the Mbh.) for Kurukṣetra also, the region lying between the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī and considered the holiest land on the earth, that it should be visited for pilgrimage to tīrthas only during day time and one should return the same day without staying for the night."

Now, the Indian literary tradition regards the land of Kurukṣetra as the cradle of Indian culture and civilisation. This is generally accepted even by modern historians of ancient India. A major portion of the earliest Indian literature was composed in this region. The Mahābhārata itself is, in all probability a product of this land. It has been the stronghold of Brahmanical religion throughout its long history. The decline set in only in the medieval age. It is for the first time in the allegorical play Prabodhacandrodaya of Kṛṣṇamiśra (circa 11th century A.D.) that we find the two evil characters, Cārvāka and king Mahāmoha rejoicing over the decline of learning even in Kurukṣetra the foremost of the holy places.[10] Prof. Agrawal's hypothesis is, therefore, on the very face of it, not in keeping with these facts. It would be interesting to see if it is supported by the verses on which he has based it.

The following four verses occur in the Mbh. Vana Parva, Ch. 129 immediately after the mention of the Rāmahrada tīrtha and the Raupyā Dṛṣadvatī:

अत्रानुवंशं पठतः शृणु मे कुरुनन्दन।
उलूखलेराभरणैः पिशाची यदभाषत ॥८॥
युगन्धरे दधि प्राश्य उषित्वाचाच्युतस्थले।
तद्वद्भूतिलये स्नात्वा सपुत्रा वस्तुमिच्छसि ॥९॥
एकरात्रमुषित्वेह द्वितीयं यदि वत्स्यसि।
एतद्वै ते दिवा वृत्तं रात्रौ वृत्तमतोऽन्यथा ॥१०॥
अत्राद्याहो निवत्स्यामः क्षपां भरतसत्तम।
द्वारमेतद्धि कौन्तेय कुरुक्षेत्रस्य भारत ॥११॥

Verse 9 appears again in the Karṇa Parva Ch. 30 with a slight change as follows:

युगन्धरे पयः पीत्वा प्रोष्य चाप्यच्युतस्थले ।
तद्वद् भूतिलये स्नात्वा कथं स्वर्गं गमिष्यति ॥४२॥

It is to be noted that there is no mention of Kurukṣetra in these verses. The tirthas named are Rāmahrada, Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya or Bhūtilaya which obviously refer to places and not regions.

The Vāmana Purāṇa, again apparently a work composed in Kurukṣetra and borrowing extensively from the Mbh, gives the name of Muñjavaṭa tīrtha in place of Rāmahrada. It supplies some welcome information which makes it worthwhile to reproduce the relevant portion of the text here.

· · · · · · ततो मुञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः ॥३८ (ii)
उपोष्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्नुपुयात् ।
तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणी लोकविश्रुता ॥३९॥
स्नात्वाऽभिगम्य तत्रैव प्रसाद्य यक्षिणीं ततः ।
उपवासं च तत्रैव महापातक नाशनम् ॥४०॥
कुरुक्षेत्रस्य तद्द्वारं विश्रुतं पुण्यवर्द्धनम् ।
प्रदक्षिणमुपावर्त्य ब्राह्मणान् भोजयेत् ततः ॥४१॥
पुष्करं च ततो गत्वा अभ्यर्च्य पितृदेवताः ॥४२॥
· · · · · कपिलश्च महायक्षो द्वारपालः स्वयं स्थितः ।
विघ्नं करोति पापानां सुगतिं च प्रयच्छति ॥४४॥
पत्नी तस्य महायक्षी नाम्नोलूखलमेखला ।
आहत्य दुन्दुभिं तत्र भ्रमते नित्यमेव हि ॥४५॥
सा ददर्श स्त्रियं चैकां सपुत्रां पापदेशजाम् ।
तामुवाच तदा यक्षी आहत्यनिःश दुन्दुभिम् ॥४६॥
युगन्धरे दधि प्राश्य उषित्वा चाच्युतस्थले ।
तद्वद् भूतालये स्नात्वा सपुत्रावस्तुमिच्छसि ॥४७॥
दिवा मया ते कथितं रात्रौ भक्ष्यामि निश्चितम् ।
एतच्छ्रुत्वा तु वचनं प्रणिपत्य च यक्षिणीम् ॥४८॥
उवाच दीनया वाचा प्रसादं कुरु भामिनि ।
ततः सा यक्षिणी तां तु प्रोवाच कृपयान्विता ॥४९॥
यदा सूर्यस्य ग्रहणं कालेन भविता क्वचित् ।
सनिहत्या तदा स्नात्वा पूता स्वर्गं गमिष्यसि ॥५०॥

In these verses too the name of Kurukṣetra is conspicuous by its absence. The description relates to Muñjavaṭa tīrtha although three individual tīrthas Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya also incidentally find mention in verse 47 which is virtually identical with Mbh. Vana, 129, 9, and Karṇa, 30, 42, reproduced above. Here in verse 48 the opposite behaviour expected during the night is clearly defined in the threat of Mahāyakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā to devour the female pilgrim. On her prayer the pilgrim is promised heaven if she takes bath in the Sannihatī tīrtha which too is in Kurukṣetra.

The induction of the regional name Kurukṣetra in his Hindi translation by Prof. Agrawal is therefore not only unwarranted but also utterly incongruous. As a matter of fact the Great Epic has only good words to offer on the sacred and sanctifying character of Kurukṣetra. It is the Dharmakṣetra of the opening verse of Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā[12] and a touch of its wind-blown dust leads even the sinner of darkest deeds to Parama Gati, the ultimate goal of mokṣa.[13] And within the boundaries of Kurukṣetra the tract lying between the holy rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī has been equated with Triviṣṭapa or heaven itself[14] while Kurukṣetra has been called Brahmavedī[15] and Kurukṣetra Samantapañcaka the Uttaravedī of Pitāmaha[16] Brahmā. Karṇa himself while squarely condemning the Madras repeatedly praises the people of the Kurus as possessing the knowledge of Dharma.[17]

Prof. Agrawal however, considers Kurukṣetra a part of the Vāhika country and as such the description of the Vāhīkas could be taken to be equally applicable to it. Here also the learned Professor was grossly mistaken. Clear evidence, both positive and negative in nature, is available in abundance to show that the territories of Kurukṣetra and the Vāh kas were mutually exclusive. Restricting ourselves to the Mbh. we may refer to the geographical definition of the Vāhīka land given in the Karṇa Parva right in the midst of the diatribe against the Madras. "The polluted Vāhika country which is devoid of Dharma, impure and deserves to be avoided" declares the poet, "lies outside the limits of the Himalayas, away from the Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī and Kurukṣetra and within the five rivers with Sindhu as the sixth."[18] He does not leave us in doubt about the identity of the five rivers and soon adds, "Where there are the forests of the Pilu tree and the five rivers Śatadru, Vipāśā, Irāvatī, Candrabhāgā and Vitastā with Sindhu as the sixth flow, leaving the hilly tract, that is the land named Āraṭṭa, devoid of Dharma and undeserving of a visit."[19] Indeed one gets an impression as if the author is anxious to pinpoint the geographical position of the Madras, Vāhikas or Āraṭṭas with an exactitude proportionate to the severity of the strictures passed against them. Yet again in the same chapter he reminds us the third time that "Āraṭṭa, also named Vāhika, is the land where flow the five rivers after leaving the mountains."[20] The Vāhīkas and Kurukṣetra are thus specifically defined as entirely separate political and geographical entities in absolutely unambiguous terms.

Finally what delivers the coup de grace is the hard fact of history that the Indo-Greeks could not have controlled the land of Kurukṣetra or East Punjab long enough to influence the religious and social outlook of its people. As A.K. Narain observes Menanders' kingdom shows Indo-Greek power at its height and "he ruled from the Kabul valley in the west to the Ravi in the east, and from the Swat valley in the north to northern Arachosia in the south."[21] Even if Menander is taken to be the Yavana king who beseiged Saketa and invaded Pāṭaliputra there is nothing in the available evidence to suggest that the presence of the Indo-Greeks in the Madhyadeśa, including Kurukṣetra, was anything but transitory, indeed too transitory to make any cultural impact. It is therefore, not at all possible to sustain the hypothesis in propounding which the late Prof. V.S. Agrawal, a scholar of acknowledged erudition, was evidently carried away by his otherwise well-placed enthusiasm for his apposite explanation of the Madraka-Kutsana episode in the Great Epic.

This leaves us with one question which, even if not quite obligatory to answer, does need to be touched upon at least briefly, for a logical conclusion of this discussion. Why is night stay or more than one night stay at Rāmahrada or Muñjavaṭa forbidden? And what is the meaning of the threat to a pilgrim eating curd at Yugandhara, staying at Acyutasthala and taking a dip at Bhūtālaya? Surprisingly, Prof. Agrawal himself offered an appropriate explanation to these questions. In his study of the Vāmana Purāṇa,[22] published one year before his Gauhati address and four years before Bhārata Sāvitrī he observed, "Many an inference can be drawn from this Gāthā verse (Vāmana P. SM., 13, 47 = Mbh. Vana, 129,9. and Karṇa, 30,42). Originally Yakṣī Ulūkhala-Mekhalā (of Muñjavaṭa tīrtha) was an ogress fed with oblation of blood and flesh or bloody-sacrifices. That tradition continued in the minds of the people. There were three other places in Kurukṣetra, viz. Yugandhara, Acyutasthala, and Bhūtālaya visited by the pilgrims on special occasions marked by particular ceremonies, viz. milk or curd as the Prasāda eaten in Yugandhara and a short stay at the two latter places. Then one came to the shrine of the Yakṣī where the pilgrims stayed only during day time and were scared away at night for fear of being eaten up by the Yakṣī, the blood-thirsty ogress, probably an illusion is made to bloody sacrifices nocturnally indulged in, which were a cause of general terror in the minds of the people. There is no doubt that here we find conspicuous mention of the Yakṣa-cult prevailing in Kurukṣetra."

Suffice it to say here that we fully agree with this view and accept it as the only plausible explanation which Prof. Agrawal erroneously discarded under the influence of his theory on the Madraka-Kutsana episode. A more elaborate study of the Yakṣa-cult in Kurukṣetra deserves an independent treatment.

Notes and References

1. Country around Śākala, modern Sialkot in Pakistan.
2. Cr. ed. Pune 1954, Karṇa, 26, 42-60.
3. *Ibid.*, 62-69.
4. *Ibid.*, 27, 73-91 and 30, 7-81.
5. *Ibid.*, 30, 68:

 क्षत्रियस्य मलं भैक्षं ब्राह्मणस्यानृतं मलम् ।
 मलं पृथिव्या बाह्लीकाः स्त्रीणां मद्रस्त्रियो मलम्॥

6. Gauhati (Assam). Jan. 2-4. 1965, pp; 18-22
7. Bhārata Sāvitrī, three volumes, Delhi 1977.
8. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 259 f.
9. Vol. II, p. 264.
10. Ed. Shastri, K. Sambashiva, Trivandrum 1936, p. 60.
11. Cr. ed. Gupta A.S., Varanasi 1967, S.M. 13, 38-50.
12. Mbh. Bhiṣma. 23, 1.
13. Mbh. Vana, 81, 174:

 पांसवोऽपि कुरुक्षेत्रे वायुना समुदीरिताः ।
 अपि दुष्कृतकर्माणं नयन्ति परमां गतिम् ॥

14. *Ibid.*, 175:

 दक्षिणेन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दृषद्वतीम् ।
 ये वसन्ति कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे ।

15. *Ibid.*, 177:

 ब्रह्मवेदी कुरुक्षेत्रं पुण्यं ब्रह्मर्षिसेवितम् ।
 तदावसन्ति ये राजन् न ते शोच्याः कथंचन ।

16. *Ibid.*, 178:

 तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरम्
 रामह्रदानां च मचक्रुकस्य च ।
 एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकम्
 पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥

17. Mbh. Karṇa 30, 73, 75:

 ब्राह्मं पाञ्चला कौरवेयाः स्वधर्मम् सत्यं मत्स्याः शूरसेनाश्च यज्ञम् ।
 प्राच्या दासा वृषला दाक्षिणात्याः, स्तेना बाह्लीकाः संकरा वै सुराष्ट्राः ॥
 आ पाञ्चालेभ्यः कुरवो नैमिषाश्च, मत्स्याश्चैवाप्यथ जानन्ति धर्मम् ।
 कलिङ्गकाश्चाङ्गका मागधाश्च, शिष्टान्धर्मानुपजीवन्ति वृद्धाः

18. *Ibid.*, 30. 10-11:

बहिष्कृता हिमवता गङ्गया च तिरस्कृताः।
सरस्वत्या यमुनया कुरुक्षेत्रेण चापि ये ।।
पञ्चानां सिन्धुषष्ठानां नदीनां येऽन्तराश्रिताः ।
तान्धर्मबाह्यानशुचीन्वाह्लीकान् परिवर्जयेत् ।।

19. *Ibid.*, 35-36 (1):

शतद्रुश्च विपाशा च तृतीयेरावती तथा ।
चन्द्रभागा वितस्ता च सिन्धुषष्ठा बहिर्गिरेः ।
आरट्टा नाम ते देशा नष्टधर्मान्न तान्व्रजेत् ।।

20. *Ibid.*, 43:

पञ्चनद्यो वहन्त्येता यत्र निःसृत्य पर्वतात् ।
आरट्टा नाम बह्लीका तेष्वार्यो न द्व्यहंवसेत् ।।

21. Vide, The Indo-Greeks, Oxford 1962, p. 97.
22. Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study, Varanasi 1964, 67.

8

SOME APOCRYPHAL TĪRTHA-NAMES IN KURUKṢETRA

The land of Kurukṣetra is the cradle of Indian Civilization. A large portion of the earliest literature in Sanskrit was composed here in the valleys of the holy rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī. It was the scene of the first political and cultural activity in our country. It is not surprising therefore that most of the Hindu gods are associated with this land in one way or the other and it is dotted with innumerable Tīrthas connected with sites, forests, lakes and rivers some of which had already acquired a holy character in the remote Vedic age.

Popular tradition plaees the number of holy sites in the region at 360.[1] Even if this number is an exaggeration, the lists of Tīrtha-names which are available to us are impressively large. Sir Alexander Cunningham in his "*Report of a Tour in the Panjab in 1878-79*"[2] listed about 207 Tīrthas. Pt. Ram Swaroop Sharma in the first part of his "*Kurukṣetra Rahasya*" published in 1931 from Jind in Haryana[3] gave the names of only 125. Ten years later Dayali Ram, sometime Director Education erstwhile Patiala State, gave probably the longest list of the Tīrtha-names, about 259 in all, in his "*Kurukṣetra Darpaṇa*," originally brought out in Urdu from Ambala in 1941.[4] In an article on "*Tīrthas of Kurukṣetra as enumerated in the Mahābhārata and Vāmana Purāṇa*," published in 1976,[5] Silak Ram listed about 229 names.[6] There are several other accounts also but a systematic and analytical examination of the innumerable Tīrtha-names of Kurukṣetra, roughly comprising the present state of Haryana, remains yet to be undertaken.[7]

Cunningham suspected most of the Tirthas in his list to be invention of modern days.[8] This suspicion cannot be said to be wholelv unwarranted. There are many names which appear rather odd as Tirtha-names although they cannot be branded as spurious without proper examination.

In this brief note we intend to take up the three Tirtha-names *Sudina*, *Ahan* and *Ilāyāspada* or *Ilāspada* which can be easily demonstrated to be apocryphal. It is interesting to note that these three names are duly mentioned in the Mahābhārata[9] and the Vāmana Purāṇa[10] and have been traditionally assigned to specific villages. Pt. Ram Swaroop Sharma places Sudina and Ahan both at village Bastali (Sanskrit Vyāsasthalı)[11] and Ilāspada at village Shergarh near Kaithal.[12]

Cunningham connects Sudina and Ahan both with village Dusen[13] and places *Ilāspada* at village Shergarh which, he thinks, was earlier known as Saraka.[14] Silak Ram locates *Sudina* at Dusen, *Ahan* at village Ahun[15] and Ilāspada at Kaithal. Dayali Ram does not take note of these three Tirtha-names.

Although these names find mention among the Tirthas of Kurukṣetra in the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa they have been undoubtedly fabricated out of expressions occurring in Ṛgveda 3.23.4 which is reproduced below in Padapāṭha[17] along with corresponding translation in English.

नित्वा दधे वरे आ पृथिव्या: इलाया: पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम्

I place thee in the best spot of earth the seat of Ilā on the best day of all days.

दृष द्वत्याम् मानुषे आपयायाम् सरस्वत्याम् रेवत् अग्ने दिदीहि ॥

On the Dṛṣadvatı, Mānuṣa, Āpayā, Sarasvatı, richly Agni ! Shine.

The Ṛṣis of this hymn, addressed to Agni, are the two Bharata princes Devaśravas and Devavāta. In the *Mantra* before us the poets place Agni in the best spot of earth, the seat of Ilā, on the best of days and pray to the god to shine in all effulgence at Dṛṣadvatī, Mānuṣa, Āpayā and Sarasvatī. Dṛṣadvatı, Āpayā and Sarasvatı are the three well known rivers of Kurukṣetra. Mānuṣa has been construed by Wilson[18] and Geldner[19] as an adjective of the (banks of) three rivers and rendered as "frequented by men". Griffith[20] on the other hand takes it as the vocative singular of Mānuṣa and translates it as "O man!" However M.L. Bhargava[21] suggested long ago that the word here stands for the name of a town and lake and like the three accompanying river-names, is the locative singular of the stem Mānuṣa. It has since been conclusively established by Ram Gopal[22] that Mānuṣa stands, in this *Mantra*, for the name of a lake. The second half of the *Mantra* thus contains four names, one of a lake or town[23] and three of rivers which had all acquired a sacred character by the time this hymn was composed.

In the first half the three expressions *Ilāyāspade, Sudinatve* and Ahnām present no difficulty. While Sāyaṇa[24] and Veṅkaṭamādhava[25] explain "*Ilāyāspade*" as '*Uttaravedyām*" or "in the Uttaravedi" denoting the land of Kurukṣetra which is known as the *Uttaravedī* of god Brahmā[26]—it agrees well with the context since the Mānuṣa lake and all the three rivers mentioned above belong to Kurukṣetra—modern scholars uniformly translate it as "the seat of Ilā. It is to be noted that *Ilāyāspade*, being a conjunction of the two words, *Ilāyāḥ* (genitive sing. of *Ilā*) and *Pade* (loc. sing. of *Pada*), cannot be taken as one single word to devote a place-name. *Sudinatve* (loc. sing. of *Sudinatva*) is explained by Sāyaṇa as "यजनीय दिवसानाम् शोभनदिनत्वार्थम् । येषु दिनेषु इन्द्रादयो वरीयांसो देवाः पूज्यन्ते तानि सुदिनानि" or "a day worthy of performing a sacrifice" representing days on which sacrifice is offered to foremost gods like Indra. Veṅkaṭamādhava takes it as "a cloudless day" in contradistinction to "Durdina", "a bad day" in the sense of a "cloudy or rainy day" (अनभ्रत्वादहनां सुदिनत्वम्). Modern scholars uniformly render it as "the best day" which too cannot be a place-name. *Ahnām* is the genitive plural of the word *Ahan* meaning "of days," and again utterly unthinkable as a place-name. It is thus impossible to visualise these three words or expressions as names of Tīrthas. Nevertheless this is precisely the situation presented to us by the Great Epic and the Vāmana Purāṇa. Why?

The explanation is quite simple.

As we have already seen the second half of the *Mantra* contains four Tīrtha-names, of one holy town/lake and three sacred rivers. Some-one placed the three expressions *Ilāyāspada, Sudina(tva)* and *Ahan* also in the same category and, taking the form *Ilāspada* of the first name,[27] converted them into Tīrtha-names and introduced them in the Mahābhārata Vana Parva Tīrthayātrā account which is, in any case, most disorderly and disorganised. Their entry into the Vāmana Purāṇa which owes much to the Mahābhārata, posed no difficulty. Priests eager to multiply the number of Tīrthas for obvious reasons assigned them to different villages.

Was this the work of a simple scribe, a mischievous interpolator or a motivated redactor? The answer to this question lies in the situation of the villages to which these three Tīrthas have been assigned. All the places lie in tehsil Kaithal of district Kurukṣetra. Shergarh is hardly 2-3 kms. from Kaithal and Bastali about 25 kms. on the road to Karnal. Ahun not far from Bastali, lies a few kms. closer to Kaithal. In the same area, hardly 11 kms. to the west of Kaithal, lies the village and lake of Mānuṣa, now called Mānasa, with the river Āpayā only one krośa[28] to its east; both mentioned in the second half of the *Mantra*. It appears that the fabricated Tīrtha-names were knowingly assigned to places near Mānuṣa and Āpayā ! The selection of the villages Ahun and Dusen was a clever move with

an eye on the phonetic similarity of these names with *Ahan* and *Sudina*. The interpolations are therefore most probably the work of a shrewd redactor who belonged to Kaithal (ancient Kapiṣṭhala) or some place nearby.

It is difficult to pinpoint the interpolations to any particular date or period in the absence of any clue. The closest possible guess could be some time around the 7th century A.D. which may be taken as the earliest possible date of the composition of the Vāmana Purāṇa.[29] It may be that these names were introduced in the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa about the same time. This will however remain only a conjecture till some definite evidence becomes available.

It may be added that relevant verses containing these Tīrtha-names find place in the main texts accepted in the critical editions of the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa. This only shows that the texts constituted in critical editions are generally not to be taken for granted.

Notes and References

1. Alexander Cunningham, Report of A Tour in the Punjab in 1878-79, Archaeological Survey of India Vol. XIV. p. 90.
2. See pp. 97-106.
3. See pp. 28-45. Part-II of this booklet never appeared.
4. See pp. 63-118. A Hindi version also appeared from Ambala. The author acknowledges the help taken in the preparation of his work from *Kurukṣetra Māhātmya* of Ramachandra Saraswati, *Kurukṣetra Darpaṇa* of Munshi Kale Rai, *Risala* of Pt. Chuni Lal and several other works including *Kurukṣetra Māhātmya*, *Kurukṣetra Parikramā*, Gurutīrthasaṅgraha and Tarikh Khalsa. See Intro. p. 4.
5. Journal of Haryana Studies Vol. III, Nos. 1-2, pp. 14-32.
6. The lists of Cunningham, Dayali Ram and Silak Ram contain names of traditional Tīrthas also which are not mentioned in literature.
7. See e.g. सरयूप्रसाद गुप्त, महाभारत तथा पुराणों के तीर्थों का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन, वाराणसी।

 Bhagwan Singh Suryavanshi, Geography of the Mahābhārata, New Delhi, 1986; S.S. Parui, Kurukṣetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa, Calcutta 1976; Savitri V. Kumar, The Purāṇic Lore of Holy Water-places, New Delhi, 1983; and S.M. Bharadwaj, Hindu places of pilgrimage in India, Delhi 1973 etc.
8. *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

9. Cr. ed. Pune 1942, Vana, 81. 63 and 84 (i):

रुद्रकोटिस्तथा कूपे ह्रदेषु च महीपते।
इलास्पदं च तत्रैव तीर्थं भारतसत्तम॥
अह्श्च सुदिनं चैव द्वे तीर्थे च सुदुर्लभे।

Readings इडास्पदं and श्रद्धास्पदं are also available.

10. Cr. ed. Varanasi 1967, SM., 15.24 (ii) and 61. Reads *Iḍāspada* for *Ilāspada*:

इडास्पदं च तत्रैव तीर्थं पापभयापहम्॥
अह्नं च सुदिनं चैव द्वे तीर्थे भुवि दुर्लभे।
तयोः स्नात्वा विशुद्धात्मा सूर्यलोकमवाप्नुयात्॥

11. *Op. cit.* p. 38. He spells *Ahan* as *Ahna* and *Sudina* as *Munina*, *Mudita* or *Sudita*.
12. *Op. cit.* p. 35. He gives a second name *Indrāspada* too for *Ilāspada*.
13. *Op. cit.* p. 99. Spells *Sudina* as *Sindan* and *Ahan* as *Anna*.
14. *Op. cit.* p. 104. Spells *Ilāspada* as *Irāspada*.
15. *Op. cit.* p. 23. Erroneously states that *Ahna* is spelled as *Anan* in Vāmana P. SM., 15. 61.
16. *Op. cit.* p. 21.
17. Vaidika Saṁśodhana Maṇḍala Pune ed. See infra n. 24.
18. Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, Text and Eng. Tr. etc. 6 Vols. Delhi, 1977.
19. Der Rig-veda, German Tr. Harvard Oriental Series, Vols. 33-35., 1951.
20. The Hymns of the Rigveda, Eng. Tr. Third ed., Two volumes, Benares.
21. The Geography of Ṛgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 31 f.
22. A New Interpretation of the Vedic Word Mānuṣa, Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Instt. Vol. XVII, May-August 1961, (prts. 3-4) pp. 193-202.
23. There is a village of identical name on a very old mound by the side of the lake, now called Mānasa.
24. Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, 5 Vols., Vaidika Saṁśodhana Maṇḍala Pune, 3rd ed. 1984.
25. Ṛgveda with commentaries of Skandasvāmin, Udgitha etc., 8 vols, Ed. Vishva Bandhu, Hoshiarpur, 1965.
26. Mbh. Vana, 81. 178:

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरं रामह्रदानां च मचक्रुकस्य च।
एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकं पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते॥

This verse has been repeated in Śalya 52.20 and also in the Vāmana Purāṇa SM., 1. 14.

Also see Vāmana P. SM., 1. 13; and 12. 15.

Much earlier Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, XXV. 13. 3 says:

त दवा अब्रुवन् एतावती वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदियावत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम्

27. Ilāyāspada is not used in later works. Ṛgveda has the form *Iḷāspada* too. See e.g. 1. 128. 1, X. 91. 1. *Iḷāyāspada* occurs in III. 29.4 and X. 91.4 also.

28. Mbh. Vana 81.55:

मानुषस्य तु पूर्वेण क्रोशमात्रे महीपते।
आपगा नाम विख्याता नदी सिद्धनिषेविता॥

The verse is almost literally repeated in Vāmana P. SM., 15.1. Āpayā and Āpagā are identical.

29. Scholars widely disagree over the date of composition of the Vāmana P.

R.C. Hazra (Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs, 2nd ed. Delhi 1975, p. 91) considers it not earlier than the 9th century A.D., P.V. Kane (History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol. V, Prt. II, pp. 904 f.) puts its compilation between 600-900 A.D.; V.S. Agrawal (Vāmana Purāṇa-A Study, p. ii) places it in the first half of the 7th century A.D.

9

YAKṢA-WORSHIP IN KURUKṢETRA

The history of Yakṣa-worship goes back to hoary antiquity. It was widely prevalent in India and its neighbouring countries since immemorial times.[1] However, while it may well be called pre-Vedic[2] there is hardly any justification for describing it as non-Aryan or pre-Aryan.[3]

In later literature the Yakṣas are usually bracketted with the Asuras, Rākṣasas and Piśācas[4] and placed by lexicons[5] in the category of demi-gods like Vidyādharas, Gandharvas Kinnaras, Guhyakas, Siddhas and Bhūtas. These demi-gods share some peculiar characteristics so that distinction in their worship is often blurred even where the presiding deity is specifically named, as we find in case of Muñjavaṭa. At this tīrtha the same deity has been described as a Piśācī[6] and Rākṣasī[7] in the Mahābhārata and as a Yakṣiṇī in the Vāmana Purāṇa.[8]

The word Yakṣa has been derived from the root √यक्ष् (यक्ष्-अ) "to speed on, to manifest", in the sense of "a mysterious being", "a supernatural being revealing himself suddenly" (as did the Yakṣa to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Vana Parva of the Mbh.) as well as in the sense of (यक्ष्-इन्) "pursuing-avenging" which reminds us of his later characteristic of "seizing, possessing" expressed in the term 'Yakṣa-graha'.[9] Piśāca(=Piśitāśa) is "one who eats raw flesh"(पिशितं मांसमश्नातीति =पिशित+√अश-अ).[10] Yakṣa has thus a split personality, as it were, both pleasant and unpleasant while Piśāca has little pleasant about him. This etymological dichotomy between the pleasant and unpleasant or benevolent and malevolent-aspects of the personality of Yakṣa persists all along through the ages.

The word Yakṣa occurs several times in the Ṛgveda (R.V.),[11] the oldest literary testament of mankind and, although the meaning assigned to it is not always free from doubt, it has often been made to yield a sense which is not entirely unhelpful for our purpose. In vii. 56.16,[12] Yakṣas are mentioned as models of beauty while in x. 88.13,[13] Agni is presented as more powerful than even the Yakṣa who, by implication, was counted among the powerful. By contrast in iv. 3.13[14] Agni is requested not to visit even secretly the house of one who frequents the abode of the Yakṣa: in vii. 61.5,[15] the purport appears to be that only immature and unintelligent people believe in strange gods like Yakṣas and in v. 70.4,[16] the poet prays to the gods to save him from an encounter with a Yakṣa. The word Piśāca, in the only instance of its appearance (i. 133.5), has undoubtedly a demoniac sense.[17] In the Atharvaveda (A V) Yakṣa is called "a soulful prodigy"[18] and "holy folk"[19] on the one hand and "a soul-possessing monster"[20] on the other. Piśāca stands for a class of demons who 'are eaters of raw flesh' (क्रव्याद्).[21] According to the Kauśika Sūtra[22] in a rite for curing a person caught by the Piśācas, the medicine-man-priest makes powder of Pṛśniparṇi (Hemionitis Cordifolia), performs an offering with A.V. 1.35, pours the remnants of that offering on the powder, utters the same hymn on it and besmears the patient with it from top to bottom. The Piśācas were thus probably already recognised as grahas or seizers of human beings in the age of the A.V.

The position does not change in later Vedic Literature. In the Brāhmaṇas Yakṣa appears only a few times and applies to a 'wonderous thing'.[23] However, they could not have been uniformly held in great esteem as Kubera, their king and lord in later literature, is a Rākṣas and lord of robbers and evil-doers in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa[24] and his hosts appear as plagueing children in the Sūtras.[25] Thus even while being an ideal for beauty[26] the Yakṣa is considered an "Evil being".[27] This also finds support in the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads. The Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka couples Yakṣas with Rākṣasas and Piśācas as killers.[28] So does the Śivopaniṣad (5, 3) which justifies their destruction.[29] According to the Sāmarahasyopaniṣad (v. 7) worshippers of Yakṣa are always to be abandoned.[30]

The ambivalence in the attitude towards Yakṣa has left Piśāca unaffected. In the Taittirīya Samhitā[31] and the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[32] (J.B.), we find him standing in the company of Asuras and Rākṣasas in opposition to the gods, fathers and men. According to J.B.[33] the wife of Triyaruṇa, king of the Ikṣvākus was a Piśāci and she suppressed the power of their fire. She is destroyed by Vṛṣa son of Jana the domestic priest of Triyaruṇa by reciting some verses of the Ṛgveda. The Maitrāyaṇyupaniṣad[34] describes the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Bhūtas, Gaṇas, Piśācas, Uragas as grahas who seize beings. According to the Atharva-Pariśiṣṭa[35] a town infilterated by Piśācas, Rākṣasas and their likes soon suffers destruction of human life by epidemics.

The dual character of Yakṣa survives in Jain and Buddhist works also. Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs appear as protectors of Jain Tīrthaṅkaras, each Tīrthaṅkara having a Yakṣa and a Yakṣiṇī as attendants.[36] They are called Vyantara or gods of intermediate status[37] and said to be dwelling in unoccupied houses, trees, forests or woods, ponds etc. which are then said to be possessed (adhiṣṭhita) by them.[38] Their temples known as Yakṣāyatanas, Yakṣakulas, Yakṣagrahas or Yakṣabhavanas, Yakṣaprāsādas and Yakṣacaityas were located outside the city[39] and visited by dubious characters like the robber Vijaya who was in the habit of wandering through gambling dens, drink-saloons, courtesans' houses and cross-roads.[40] Some Yakṣas are devoted to the Buddha[41] while others molest his followers in their woodland haunts.[42] In the Ayakūṭajātaka Yakṣas annoyed with the Buddha, on being denied bali, plan his assassination.[43] There are direct references to sacrificial offerings to the Yakṣa demons in the Jātakas.[44] Malalasekera[45] classifies different kinds of Yakṣas, known in Buddhism, as spirits, ogres, dryads, ghosts, spooks—generally speaking decadent divinities-beings half deified, having a deva's supernatural powers, particularly as regards influencing people, partly helpful, partly harmful. At many places Devatā and Yakṣa are synonymous.[46] Nonetheless there is a tendency in Buddhism to restrict the designation Yakṣa to demons.[47] A passage in the Dīghanikāya sums up all the demoniac attributes of a Yakṣa.[48] In later Buddhist literature they have been degraded to the state of red-eyed cannibal ogres.[49] The female Yakṣas (Yakṣiṇīs) are, in these cases, more fearful and evil-minded than the male. They eat flesh and blood and devour even men and corpses. They eat babies and are full of spite and vengeance. Jātaka stories abound in instances of this nature.[50]

In the Epics and Purāṇas the degeneration of Yakṣa to his malevolent self is largely accomplished and he gradually becomes almost a regular member of the Asura-Gandharva-Bhūta-Piśāca-Guhyaka-Vetāla group.[51] It is in keeping with this development that the Rāmāyaṇa[52] derives Yakṣa from the root √Yakṣ "to gobble." Tāḍakā, originally a Yakṣiṇī, becomes a Rākṣasī[53] while Ulūkhalamekhalā is at the same time a Yakṣī, Piśācī as well as a Rākṣasī.[54] Although at one place the Rāmāyaṇa[55] compares them to blooming lotuses in the sky at another[56] they are described with the Rākṣasas and horrifying Piśācas as creatures who wander in the night. Manu[57] mentions meat and intoxicating drinks as the food of Yakṣas, Piśācas and Gandharvas. In the Mahābhārata[58] Rākṣasas, Piśācas and others of their group are known as "eaters of raw flesh." They eat human flesh and drink blood.[59] The Yātudhānas and Piśācas steal oblations.[60] The Yakṣī named Jarā of Rājagṛha is described as मांसशोणितभोजना.[61] There are Piśācagrahas and Yakṣagrahas.[62] One possessed by a Yakṣa soon turns mad and is known as Yakṣagraha.[63] The Purāṇas give a detailed account of the nature, food and habitat of the Piśācas. They are said to dwell or congregate in cremation grounds together with Bhūtas, Vetālas, Yakṣas etc. and move about at twilight frequenting deserted

houses, royal roads and doorways.[64] One who sees them or other demons will die within nine months. They can be propitiated with small and mean offerings such as food that has been sneezed or stepped on, food mixed with hair, insects or tears, or licked by a dog, or unconsecrated food. They are given offerings of liquor, flesh, rice, curd, sesamum, incense, black cloth etc. They have the power of invisibility and can easily enter the mouth of anyone and penetrate to the intestines and they feed on faeces.[65] The Yakṣas, just by a glance, the Rākṣasas by entering and the Piśācas by afflicting or pressing, drink the blood and eat the flesh and marrow of human beings.[66]

According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa[67] the Rākṣasas, deranged by hunger, attacked, together with the Yakṣas, Brahman himself who had assumed a nightlike body, and the Creater cried out to them not to eat, but to protect him. Their king is Kubera the lord of Alakā.[68] Ulūkhala-Ulūkhalī are counted among Piśāca couples.[69] We shall revert to them again.

Still later, about the second half of the 11th century A.D., we come across a Yakṣa as gigantic as a mountain in the Kathāsaritsāgara.[70] In the same work[71] Bhūtivarmā Rākṣasa tells Kānabhūti that the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Piśācas rejoice in the night since, eclipsed by the brilliance of the sun, they wield no power during the day. A Vidyādharī named Madanamañcukā makes an offering of wine, flesh and other dainties with her own hand to Yakṣas.[72] We hear of a Yakṣiṇī of heavenly beauty, surrounded by many Yakṣas with feet turned the wrong way and squinting eyes, enjoying all kinds of meat and drink.[73] Four Pāśupata ascetics stay overnight in a deserted temple of Śiva in a wood where each one of them falls prey to Yakṣiṇī Śṛṅgotpādinī who, playing on a lute of bones recites a charm which produces horns on him. Bewildered he rises up and dances till he falls into the blazing fire from which he is dragged out half-burnt by the Yakṣiṇī and devoured with delight. She is ultimately subdued by their companion Niścayadatta.[74] A Yakṣa named Supratīka is turned into a Piśāca by the curse of Kubera.[75]

The Nīlamata Purāṇa[76] relates a story according to which Kashmir was occupied, in consequence of a curse of Kaśyapa, for six months of each year by the Piśācas, who forced the human settlers to retire from the country from the full-moon day of Aśvayuja to that of Caitra. The Grāmadevatāpratiṣṭhā[77] includes Yakṣas among grāmadevatās in the company of Pūtanā and others who kill children, Bhūtas, Pretas and Piśācas, Kūṣmāṇḍas, Śākinīs, Ḍākinīs, Vetālas and others. As V.S. Agrawal[78] has shown Yakṣa-cult is still widely prevalent in the form of worship of various local male and female deities like Bīrs or Pīrs, Mātās and Yoginīs. However now it rests more on fear than on genuine respect.

Having formed an idea of the character of the Yakṣas and their kin and of the nature of Yakṣa-worship we can take up a brief survey of the Yakṣa cult in

Kurukṣetra. The observations arising from the evidence of our earliest literary works are of course, largely relevant in case of Kuruksetra which is regarded as the cradle of Indian civilisation. We shall therefore take note of more specific traditions only. In the remote past when the austerities of king Kuru were successful god Viṣṇu, granting him the desired boons, assigned for the protection of Kurujāṅgala the Yakṣa named Candra, the serpent Vāsuki, the Vidyādhara Śaṅkukarṇa, the Rākṣasa chief Sukeśī, the king Ajāvana and the great god Agni.[79] A Yakṣa was thus associated with the region from the very day it acquired the name Kuruksetra. A verse common to the Mahābhārata[80] and the Vāmana Purāṇa[81] describes the heartland of Kuruksetra, with a radius of five yojanas on all sides and therefore known as Samantapañcaka, as bounded on its four corners by four Yakṣas called Dvārapālas or guardian deities. This core of the country was also named Uttaravedī of god Brahmā.[82] The four Yaksas were Tarantuka, Arantuka, Kapila and Macakruka.[83] Cunningham[84] has identified Tarantuka with Ratan Yakṣa in the N.E. corner close to the town of Pipli on the G.T. Road near the Sarasvatī, Arantuka with village Ber or Baher to the N.W. of Kaithal where a Yaksa-kuṇḍa exists, Macakruka with village Sinkh in the S.E. corner and Kapila Mahā Yakṣa of Rāmahrada with the present town of Ram Rai in the S.W. corner where we have a tīrtha named after Kapila. In place of Rāmahrada the Vāmana Purāṇa[85] names the tīrtha Muñjavaṭa which local tradition connects with a neighbouring village called Barahban. The Mahābhārata[86] describes one Śaṅkhatīrtha, three other tīrthas away from Vinaśana upstream on the Sarasvatī, where Yakṣas, Vidyādharas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas and Siddhas in thousands subsisted on the fruit of that tree while moving about unseen by human beings.

As the statement appended at the end shows the identification of the towns associated with the four guardian Yakṣas of Kurukṣetra is by no means free from confusion. Some other suggestions, even though rather unorthodox, are more in keeping with the traditional geographical definition of Kurukṣetra, as a sacrificial altar given in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka with Khāṇḍava as the southern half, Srughna the northern half, Pariṇat the lower or western half and Marus or the Rajasthan desert as its Utkara or rubbish heap. V.S. Agrawal[87] places Macakruka Yakṣa at Jakhala in the N.W. of Kurukṣetra across the Sarasvatī Ghaggar. The name is probably a corrupt form of Yakṣasthala and its location makes it an ideal site for the Yakṣa Dvārapāla in the N.W. corner. There are other centres of Yakṣa-worship like Jakhepal identified with village Yakṣapālaka[88] and Patran identified with Pāṭalā[89] in the same region. The Vāmana Purāṇa[90] names Mālavaṭa Yakṣa near Pañcanada. Some other Yakṣas are also mentioned in the region.[91] The pilgrim is advised to go to Pañcanada after propitiating Rantuka or Arantuka Yakṣa.[92] Since Pañcanada figures as a tīrtha it obviously refers to the place below Multan, now in Pakistan which went by this name[93] and not generally to Punjab as a land of five rivers. If Rantuka or Arantuka was near Pañcanada we have to

place one of the Dvārapāla Yakṣas of Kurukṣetra somewhere deep in the Marus which agrees better with its traditional western corner.[94] Placing all the four Dvārapālas to make a much smaller rectangle within the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī doab would lead to the conclusion that the geographical definition of Kurukṣetra had shrunk to denote a very small unit by the age of the Great Epic and the Purāṇas.[95]

The Āṭānāṭiya[96] Sutta contains a vivid description of the Yakkha kingdom of Uttarakuru which, according to Buddhist literature, denoted the hilly region to the north of Kurukṣetra extending from Srughna into the high Himalayas.[97] In the Dīghanikāya two Yakkhas, Yugandhara[98] and Serīsaka,[99] are mentioned who were apparently the guardians of the two important towns of Yugandhara or Jagadhari in the N.E. and Śairīṣaka or Sirsa in the N.W. The Mahāmāyūrī, translated into Chinese in the 4th century A.D.,[100] gives names of numerous localities together with the names of their presiding Yakṣas. Several of these are from Kurukṣetra. The text assigns Kapila Yakṣa to Bahudhānyaka,[101] the country about Rohtak,[102] Mālyadhara[103] and Muñjakeśa[104] to Agrodaka or the present town of Agroha,[105] Kārttikeya to Rohitaka or Rohtaka,[106] Duryodhana[107] and Siddhayātra[108] to Srughna identified with the site of Sugh near Jagadhari,[109] Arjuna to Arjunāvana,[110] Purañjaya to Yaudheya,[111] Sthūṇa to Sthūṇā[112] and the Yakṣa chiefs Tarārka and Kutarārka[113] and the well-known Yakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā[114] generally to Kurukṣetra. The last three immediately remind us of Dvārapālas Tarantuka and Arantuka[115] and Yakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā, wife of Kapila Yakṣa[116] of Rāmahrada.[117]

The Mahāmāyūrī is supposed to belong to the class of works called the Dhāraṇīs or "protective spells" which constitute a large and important part of Mahāyānist Buddhist literature. It is one of the five Dhāraṇīs collectively entitled Pañcarakṣā which is extremely popular in Nepal. The other four Dhāraṇīs are Mahāpratisarā for protection against sin, disease and other evils, Mahāsahasrapramardinī against evil spirits, Mahāśītavatī against hostile planets, wild animals and poisonous insects and Mahā(rakṣā) mantrānusāriṇī against diseases. The Mahāmāyūrī frequently entitled Vidyārājñī—"Queen of secret sciences"—is for protection against snake-poison. It takes its name from the notorious hostility of mayūra(peacock) towards the snakes, but was also used as a general remedy for diseases.[118]

The popularity of the Mahāmāyūrī in Kurukṣetra of the 7th century A.D. deserves special notice. In the Harṣacarita[119] Bāṇa describes how Harṣavardhana, returning in haste on account of his fathers' terminal illness, enters the royal palace and finds people performing various kinds of ceremonies and sacrifices and chanting the Mahāmāyūrī hymn. This popularity of Mahāmāyūrī need not be taken to reflect the spread of Buddhism in the region. In spite of extensive proselytising activity by Gautama Buddha himself and zealous royal patronage extended

particularly by Aśoka and Kaniṣka Buddhism failed to make a dent in the religious learnings of the people of Kurukṣetra.[120] The Nalanda Clay Seal and Sonepat Copper Seal[121] and Madhuban Plate[122] inscriptions of Harṣa describe his father as a Paramādityabhakta (devout worshipper of Āditya or Sun) and Varṇāśramavyavasthāpanapravṛttacakra (the upholder of Varṇāśramadharma). According to Bāṇa, the conversion to Buddhism of Harṣa and his sister took place only after the completion of his conquests under the influence of the Buddhist ascetic Divākaramitra.[123] Even then he did not patronise Buddhism to the exclusion of other religions. His inscriptions refer to him as a Paramamāheśvara (devout Śaiva) and his Sonepat seal as well as the seal presented to him by a village headman, as recorded in the Harṣacarita, bore a Nandi device, while his coins carry Śaiva devices.[124]

As observed by Winternitz[125] "the Dhāraṇis belong to a period at which Buddhism in India began to be more and more assimilated to Hinduism, while outside India it tended to make compromises and to become contaminated by the popular religions of the countries in question. In the course of time the difference between the Dhāraṇīs and the Mantras belonging to the Tantras, became more and more obliterated and finally the Dhāraṇis were completely supplanted by the Mantras." There is for instance "a Gaṇapati Dhāraṇī, addressed to the Śaivite god Gaṇapati in spite of the fact that it is proclaimed by Buddha." This observation finds full support in the prevalence of Śaivism and Tântric worship in Kurukṣetra side by side with the popularity of the Mahāmāyūrī as testified by Bāṇa. The Harṣacarita[126] narrates the performance of the exordium of the potent rite Mahākālahṛdaya in the great cemetry by Bhairavācārya with the active assistance of none else but king Puṣpabhūti, the progenitor of the dynasty. The rite was performed in the night and its successful completion involved the subduing of a Vetāla or goblin, a ghost occupying a dead body. The people in the capital city of Sthāṇvīśvara are said to have included worshippers of Caṇḍī and Mahākāla.[127] The Bhairavācārya too, was a Śākta who had offered human flesh to Śakti and the Piśācas and thereby secured superhuman powers.[128] Evidently therefore, the reason for the popularity of the Mahāmāyūrī in Sthāṇvīśvara was not popularity of Buddhism but the fact that it was not considered an exclusively Buddhist text any more.

To some of the Yakṣas the Mahāmāyūrī assigns whole Janapadas or districts/regions instead of single towns. Thus Kapila is the presiding Yakṣa of Bahudhānyaka or the region around Rohtak, which was conquered by Nakula after vanquishing the Mattamayūraka Yaudheya warriors in a fierce fight.[129] Arjuna Yakṣa presides over Arjunāvana which is probably a scribal error for Ārjunāyana, the country where the Ārjunāyanas held sway.[130] Purañjaya Yakṣa is assigned to Yaudheya which is described as a Janapada in the Yaśastilakacampū[131] with its capital at Rajapura, identified with the present town of Rajpura situated on the G.T. Road about 25 kms. from Ambala on the way to Ludhiana.[132] The town

would be an appropriate choice for a capital if the Yaudheyas, at any time, controlled the whole of Haryana and Punjab upto the Sutlej as the wide provenance of their coins suggests.[133] Yakṣa chiefs Tarārka and Kutarārka and the Mahā Yakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā also commanded a very wide area of influence as they have been assigned to Kurukṣetra generally which was in early ages almost coterminous with the present state of Haryana.

Archaeological evidence also confirms the prevalence of Yakṣa cult almost all over the region. Yakṣa images provide the earliest specimens of lithic art in India.[134] They can be distinguished by their colossal size, massive build, emphasis on muscular strength, a bulging belly, a turban on the head, scarf thrown on shoulders and arms with a knot around the chest, dhoti as a lower garment fastened with a girdle, heavy ear-rings, heavy torque, flat triangular necklace and armlets with feathered projections.[135] Yakṣa sculptures have been recovered from places scattered all over Kurukṣetra and even across its boundaries:

(i) A head and bust of a colossal Yakṣa image of red sandstone was found at Palwal in Gurgaon district in 1914 and is now deposited in the Provincial Museum Lucknow (o.107). The style of the turban and the torque, the necklace and the armlets with feathered projections seen in the side view, all point to the image being an early Yakṣa type that may be assigned to the early Śuṅga period about the second century B.C.[136] (*Plate* 1)

(ii) Two Yakṣa sculptures have been reported by D.S. Punia,[137] one from village Bhadas 63 kms. south of Gurgaon on the Delhi-Alwar road and the other from village Hathin 77 kms. south-east of Gurgaon on the Palwal-Hathin road. The Bhadas figure (190 × 26.67 cm.) carved on a railing pillar in red sandstone, with mutilated face and headgear, wearing a dhoti, a seven-stringed bracelet reaching above the navel, seven-stringed armlets and five-stringed wristlets, stands in a samabhaṅga pose on a fish-tailed makara. The Hathin sculpture, similarly carved on a railing pillar (142.50 × 25.40 cm.) of red sandstone, stands in samabhaṅga pose on a Bhāravāhaka dwarf who appears to support the pillar. In this case too the face and headgear are partly mutilated. The figure wears a dhoti tied with a Kāyabandha, a saṅghāti as upper garment and four-stringed bangles. Both sculptures appear to belong to the Śuṅga period. (*Plates* 2 & 3)

(iii) One beautiful image of a Yakṣī was recovered from Mehrauli near Delhi which was traditionally a part of ancient Kurukṣetra. It is preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi (No. A-29). Made in buff sandstone, the Yakṣī is shown standing under a tree, embracing its trunk

with her left hand in an attitude suggesting a Śālabhañjikā figure and has been assigned to the second century B.C.[138] (*Plate* 4)

(iv) The ancient mound of Khokrakot at Rohtak yielded a carved lion-capital fragment, 3 ft. in width and 18 inches in height which is now preserved at the National Museum in New Delhi. On one side of this fragment two winged lions (sapakṣa simhas) are seated facing in opposite directions while its backside carries lions without wings with a couple holding reins in a traditional manner. The figure to the left is a Yakṣī and to the right a male Yakṣa offering her a cup of wine with his extended right hand, in a pleasant mood.[139] (*Plate* 5)

(v) About 8 kms. to the S.S.E. of Thanesar, in village Amin, the traditional site of the Cakravyūha in the Mahābhārata war,[140] were discovered two inscribed red stone rectangular pillars from the Thakurji shrine on the west bank of the tank called Suraj Kunda. R.C. Agrawal[141] and A.K. Coomaraswamy[142] place these pillars somewhere in the Śuṅga period. The pillar to the left side depicts a male person in the Sthānaka mudrā wearing a typical Śuṅga turban, a dhoti tightened with the help of a Kāyabandha (waiste-cloth), long ear-rings and two full-bloomed lotuses carved above his head. The figure has been identified with a Padma-Pāṇi Yakṣa who appears to be pondering over some problem out of great anxiety.

The pillar to the right side depicts a couple in an amorous scene. The lady with very large breasts wears a typical Śuṅga turban, three necklaces, heavy kuṇḍalas in her ears and a dhoti tightened with a Kāyabandha. She is looking with a smile at the male who holds a wine cup in his left hand. The couple is taken to represent a Yakṣa mithuna.

Moving further in the north, the well known site of Sanghol, about 40 kms. from Chandigarh on the road to Ludhiana, has yielded a number of interesting sculptures carved on railing pillars. Following four of these represent Yakṣas and Yakṣis.

(vi) Paribhoga-darśiṇi (Yakṣī with mirror) 100 cm. (H) 19 cm (W); 15 cm (D)-Yakṣī standing gracefully over a dwarf Yakṣa and admiring herself in a mirror. Her bent left hand is holding a mirror; the index finger of her bent right hand is pointing towards nail marks (nakhakṣata) in the shape of a crescent on her right cheek.[143] (*Plate* 6)

(vii) Yakṣārohī (Yakṣī riding Vāma Yakṣa): Yakṣī seen being borne by a Yakṣa under a śāla tree (shorea robusta). She is astride his back, her hands on his shoulders and her thighs pressing his sides, her eyes and lips curved in a joyous smile.[144] (*Plate* 7)

(viii) Darpaṇa-dhāriṇī (Yakṣī with a mirror): Yakṣī seen standing over a crouching Yakṣa under a Kadamba tree (stephegyne parviflora) in full bloom-wearing a nūpura, mekhalā and a necklace which she is looking in the mirror to see how it sets off her beauty.[145] (*Plate* 8)

(ix) Yakṣī holding lotus flowers seen holding a bouquet of lotus flowers by their stalks in her right hand beside her face standing over the back of a kneeling Vāma Yakṣa grasping her mekhalā or girdle and wearing bangles on her forearms, kuṇḍalas in her ears and nūpuras on her ankles.[146] (*Plate* 9)

(x) From Sirsa in the N.W. has been recovered a headless terracotta figurine depicting a pot-bellied male wearing a Yajñopavīta and a shawl over his shoulders who apparently represents a Yakṣa.[147]

Two of these sculptures described at numbers (iii) and (v) have been counted by V.S. Agrawal[148] among 18 notable Indian Yakṣa-Yakṣī images.

But for the depredations of invading hordes from the north-west much more sculptural wealth would undoubtedly have been available today because the region was in no way wanting in artistic activity. Bāṇa[149] describes Śrikaṇṭha Janapada another name for Kurukṣetra, as the country where stone-cutters were busy chiselling and carving stones for use in temples.

A peculiar aspect of the traditional attitude towards the Yakṣa tīrthas of Kurukṣetra deserves special notice. The pilgrims are allowed only a hurried visit to these places and night stay or more than one night's stay is not permitted. We are referring particularly to Rāmahrada[150] or Muñjavaṭa, Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya.[151] Of Rāmahrada and Yugandhara the former, as already noted, is the seat of Mahā Yakṣa Kapila and his wife Mahā Yakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā. This is a rather strange couple. While the husband is described as the guardian of one of the gates of Kurukṣetra and is said to destroy sins and grant good position after death[152] his consort is depicted as quite the opposite of it. The Mahābhārata[153] calls her a Piśācī and the Vāmana Purāṇa[154] adds the adjective Mahāgrāhī pointing to her demoniac characteristic of seizing body and mind of people and causing insanity etc. She comes of the family of the Piśāca couple Ulūkhala and Ulūkhalī whose horrifying looks are characterised by rigid, unwinking eyes and a long darting tongue.[155] The adjective of Piśitāśana-eater of raw flesh given to a Piśāca, becomes really meaningful in her case in view of her threat to eat up the female pilgrim during the night[156] which is the time for the Yakṣas and Piśācas to operate. Night stay is therefore forbidden. The eating of curd, one of the items to be offered to Piśācas and Yakṣas, is disallowed at Yugandhara[157] (Jagadhari) which is the seat of the Yakṣa bearing identical name. Hardly four kms. away lies Srughna or Sugh which is assigned to Yakṣas, Duryodhana and Siddhayātra.

Acyutasthala has not been identified so far. Bhūtālaya, probably signifying 'abode of Bhūtas' fellow creatures of the Yakṣas, has been placed at Jind. At Acyutasthala sleeping or night stay and at Bhūtālaya taking of bath is forbidden which confirms their Yakṣa connection. This is contrary to the normal requirement of a purifying bath at other tīrthas. In the land of Kurukṣetra particularly, every tīrtha has its pond or tank, often with pucca bathing ghats. At bigger sacred complexes like Thanesar there are many tanks and a dip in each one of these has its own special merit. Although the centres of Yakṣa cult present in the night an atmosphere entirely opposite of that during the day there is no doubt whatsoever of the merit of visiting them during the day. In fact the pilgrim is required to begin his tīrtha-yātrā in Kurukṣetra with a visit to the Rantuka Yakṣa.[158] Also the ban on night-stay is limited only to these Yakṣa tīrthas and does not apply to the region of Kurukṣetra generally as V.S. Agrawal thinks.[159] Kurukṣetra is the holiest of the holy tīrthas according to the Mahābhārata[160] and the Purāṇas[161] and there is not even a trace of any idea of Kurukṣetra-Kutsana in the Great Epic.[162]

It has been observed that in early centuries of the Christian Era assimilation and synthesis of the Yakṣa cult within the fold of Śaivism was in progress.[163] The Mahāmāyūri[164] counts Śiva Mahākāla in its list of Yakṣas as the presiding deity of Śivapurāhāra and Varanasi. According to the Matsya Purāṇa[165] many Yakṣas enrolled themselves as gaṇas of Śiva and several others got converted to Śaivism. Even Mahā Yakṣa Kubera was raised to the position of Gaṇeśa and Mudgarpāṇi enrolling himself in the service of Śiva began acting as a doorkeeper of the citizens of Varanasi.[166] The phenomenon is however best illustrated by the story of Harikeśa, son of the Yakṣa king Pūrṇabhadra, who disregarding his father's opposition, worships Śiva and wins a boon to become the guardian deity-kṣetrapāla of Varanasi and chief of all his gaṇas there.[167] All this however does not justify the sweeping assertion that only Yakṣa-worship existed earlier and Śiva-worship developed entirely out of the Yakṣa-cult.[168]

Fusion of the Yakṣa-cult with Tāntric worship was another contemporary and corelated phenomenon. We find the Mahā Yakṣa Senapati figuring in a Tāntric mantra in the Garuḍa Purāṇa:[169] ॐ नमः खड्गवज्रपाणये महायक्षसेनापतये स्वाहा । This process of assimilation, synthesis or fusion, whatever we might call it, was wide-spread and covered Kurukṣetra too. Muñjavaṭa, the seat of Mahāyakṣī Ulūkhalamekhalā, is called a tīrtha of Mahādeva and a pilgrim passing a night there is promised the status of Śiva's Gaṇapati.[170] The mention of the Yakṣiṇī there gets only the second place. Saptacaru, below Vinaśana, is a Śaiva tīrtha also connected with Yakṣas, Guhyakas and Rākṣasas etc.[171] In case of two other tīrthas of Śiva, namely Pañcanada and Koṭitīrtha the pilgrim is advised to undertake a visit after first paying homage to the Yakṣa Arantuka who is one of the four Yakṣa gate-keepers of Kurukṣetra.[172]

We have also seen above how Yakṣiṇī Śṛṅgotpādinī devours four Pāśupata ascetics staying in a deserted Śiva temple during the night before she is subdued there.

The nexus between Śāktism and Tāntrism and Yakṣa-worship suggested by the Garuḍa Purāṇa above can also be similarly supported. The region dotted with centres of Yakṣa-worship has an equally generous share of Śāktapīṭhas. The names include Sarasvatī,[173] Jyotiḥsara [174] Brahmāvarta,[175] Pṛthūdaka,[176] Ṛṇamocana,[177] Kapālamocana,[178] Oghavatī,[179] Kurukṣetra,[180] Karavīrapura[181] and Kṛtaśauca.[182] Like some of the Yakṣa-centres quite a few of the Śāktapīṭhas are located across and adjoining the boundaries of Kurukṣetra, as for instance Pāṭalā,[183] Śatadru,[184] Pañcanada,[185] Mathurā[186] and Hastināpura.[187] And of course some of these are not exclusive to one of them but common to both.

All this evidence leads to the conclusion that the Yakṣa cult was, at one time, fairly wide-spread in the land of Kurukṣetra and its adjoining areas and constitutes an important chapter in the history of development of religious beliefs in this region.

Statement Showing
Yaksas with villages/towns to which they are assigned by different authorities

Authority	*Arantuka*	*Tarantuka*	*Macakruka*	*Kapila*
Cunningham ASR Vol. XIV (pp. 89-90)	Ber/Baher W.N.W. of Kaithal	(=Ratan Yakṣa) Near Pipli on the Sarasvatī 6 kms. N.E. of Thanesar	Sinkh (a Yakṣa-Kuṇḍa exists)	Ram Rai 17 kms. W. of Jind
R.S. Sharma	-do- (p. 33)	Sinkh (p. 29)	(=Ratnuk Yakṣa) Ratgal near Pipli (p. 28)	-do-
Dyali Ram (Hindi)	—	(=Ratan Yakṣa) Samak near Panipat (p. 63)	—	—
Dyali Ram (Urdu)	Sinkh (p. 74)	(=Ratan Yakṣa) Ratgal near Pipli (p. 66)	—	—
Silak Ram	Barta 18 kms. N.W. of Kaithal	-do- (p. 16) Also (=Tarkhu tīrtha) Sinkh, 16 Kms.) N. of Gohana (p. 17)	Kirmach 16 kms. S. of Thanesar (p. 16)	Ram Rai

(*Contd....*)

...*Contd.*

Authority	*Vāsuki*	*Ulūkhala*	*Bhūteśvara Bhūtālaya*	*Hara Yakṣa*	*Yakṣa (no name given)*
Cunningham ASR XIV	—	—	—	—	Ber/Baher/Sinkh
R.S. Sharma	—	—	Jind (p. 30)	—	
Dyali Ram	—	—	Jind (p. 71)	Baher W.N.W. of Kaithal (p. 83)	Kaithal (p. 85) and Samak (p. 63)
Silak Ram	Barta 18 kms N.W. of Kaithal (p. 18)	—	Jind (p. 71) Ram Rai (p. 18) (Also locates Yugandhara at Ram Rai)	—	Dakhni Khera 8 kms. S. of Jind (p. 18)

Works cited: (i) Cunningham Alexander, Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vol. XIV (1878-79 , Reprint, Varanasi 1970.

(ii) Sharma R.S. Kurukṣetra Rahasya, Prt. i, (Hindi), Jind 1926.

(iii) Dayali Ram Lala, Kurukṣetra Darpaṇa (Hindi), Ambala Cantt. 1941.

(iv) -do- (Urdu), -do-

(v) Phogat Silak Ram, Tirthas of Kurukṣetra as enumerated in the Mahābhārata and Vāmana Purāṇa, Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol VIII, Nos. 1-2, 1976, pp. 14-32.

Notes and References

1. Tavakar N.G., The Essays throwing new light on the Gandharvas, The Apsarases, The Yakshas and The Kinnaras, Bombay 1971, p. 57.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
3. Coomaraswamy Anand K., Yakṣas, New Delhi 1971, Intro. p. 3.
4. See the account of creation in Manu Smṛti, 1.37 (1):

 यक्ष रक्षः पिशाचांश्च गन्धर्वाप्सरसोऽसुरान् ।

5. e.g. Amarakośa, Sarga, 11.
6. Cr. ed. Vana, 129.8:

 अत्रानुवंशं पठतः शृणु मे कुरुनन्दन ।
 उलूखलैराभरणैः पिशाची यदभाषत ॥

7. *Ibid.*, Karṇa, 30.46:

 इति तीर्थानुसर्तारं राक्षसी काचिदब्रवीत् ।
 एकरात्रशयी गेहे महोलूखलमेखला ॥

8. Cr. ed. SM., 13.39:

 उपोष्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्नुयात् ।
 तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणो लोकविश्रुता ॥

9. Suryakanta, A Practical Vedic Dictionary, Delhi 1981, p. 536.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 430.
11. Vedic Index, ii. 182.
12. ····· यक्षदृशो न शुभयन्त मर्याः ।
13. ··· अग्निं ····· यक्षस्याध्यक्षं तविषं बृहन्तम् ॥
14. मा कस्य यक्षं सदमिद्धुरो गा ····
15. अमूरा विश्वा वृषणाविमा वां न यासु चित्रं ददृशे न यक्षम् ।
 द्रुहः सचन्ते अनृता जनानां न वां निण्यान्यचिते अभूवन् ॥

 For interpretation Cf. Agrawal V.S., प्राचीन भारतीय लोकधर्म, Varanasi 1964, p. 120.

16. मा कस्याद्भुतक्रतू यक्षं भुजेमा तनूभिः । मा शेषसा मा तनसा ॥
17. पिशङ्गभृष्टिमम्भृणं पिशाचिमिन्द्र संमृण । सर्वं रक्षो निबर्हय ॥

 (Wilsons' trans : 'Destroy, Indra, the tawny-coloured, fearfully roaring Piśāci; annihilate all the Rākṣasas.') Also cf. Keith A.B, The Religion and Philosophy of The Veda And Upaniṣads, Reprint 1970, Pt. i, p. 74.

18. X. 8.43. For English translation and notes see Whitney William Dwight, Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā, Two Volumes, Delhi 1962.
19. Stutley, Margaret and James, A Dictionary of Hinduism, New Delhi 1986, p. 345.
20. X. 2.32.
21. V. 25.9., Cf. Vedic Index, i. 533.
22. 26.36.
23. See e.g. Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, ed. Raghuvira and Lokesh Chandra, 2nd revised edn., Delhi 1986, iii. 203.
and The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, ed. Gaastra Dieuke, Leiden 1919, 1.1.1.
24. xiii. 4.3.10.
25. Keith, *Op. cit.*, i. 242.
26. Cf. Gobhila Gṛhya Sūtra iii. 4.28 and Drāhyāyaṇa Gṛhya Sūtra iii. 1.25:

 यक्षमिव चक्षुषः प्रियो भूयासम् ।

27. e.g. A.V. X. 2.32. Whitney's tr.
28. xii. 5:

 नैनं यक्षो न पिशाचो हिनस्ति ।
 न जम्भको नाप्यसुरो न यक्षः ॥

29. Upaniṣad Saṅgraha, ed. Shastri J.L., Delhi 1980, Pt. ii, p. 337:

 यक्षरक्षः पिशाचानां ध्वंसनं मन्त्रसत्कृतम् ।
 रक्षार्थं बालरूपाणां सूतिकानां गृहेषु च ॥

30. *Ibid.*, p. 235:

 यक्षोपासकाः सदा त्याज्याः ।

31. ii. 4.1.1:

 देवा मनुष्या पितरस्तेऽन्यत आसन्नसुरा रक्षांसि पिशाचास्तेऽन्यतः ····

32. i. 154.
33. iii. 96:

 पिशाची वा इयं त्रियरुणस्य जाया सैनत् कशिपुना छादयित्वा अध्यास्त इति । तद् अभिव्याहरत् इत्येवैनाम् इदम् अग्नेर् हर ऊर्ध्वम् उद्द्रवत् सर्वाम् प्रादहत् ····

34. Upaniṣad Saṅgraha, Delhi 1980 p. 176:

 यक्षराक्षसभूतगणपिशाचोरगग्रहादीनाम्....

35. 70.15.4:

 संप्रविष्टैः पिशाचैर्वा रक्षोभिर्वापि तन्निभैः ।
 अचिरान्नगरं तत्र जनमारेण मार्यते ॥

36. Tavakar, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
37. Venkatasubbiah A., Vedic Studies, Mysore 1932, p. 152.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 152 f.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 153 and 156.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
41. Haldar J.R. in Religious Life In Ancient India, ed. D.C. Sircar, Calcutta 1972, p. 156.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Fausboll V., The Jâtaka, 7 Vols. London 1962. Vol. iii, p. 146:

 यक्खा बलिकम्मं अलभमाना बोधिसत्तस्स कुज्झित्वा हिमवन्ते यक्खसमागमं कत्वा बोधिसत्तस्स मारणत्थाय एककक्खलं यक्खं पेसेसुं ।

44. Haldar J.R., *Ibid.*, p. 155.
45. Malalasekera G.P., Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, 2 Vols. London 1960, Vol. ii, p. 675.
46. Venkatasubbiah, *op. cit.*, p. 195.
47. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Prt. ii. Addenda p. 7.
48. Ed. Kashyap Bhikkhu J., 3 Vols. Nalanda 1958, Vol. iii. p. 157, ix. 3.9:

 अयं यक्खो गह्णाति, अयं यक्खो आविसति, अयं यक्खो हेठेति, अयं यक्खो विहेठेति, अयं यक्खो हिंसति, अयं यक्खो विहिंसति, अयं यक्खो न मुञ्चतीति ।

49. Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, p. 676.
50. The Jātaka (Eng. Tr. of Jātaka Stories) Ed. Cowel E.B., 3 Vols. London 1957, Jātaka Stories No. 1, 96, 155, 196, 398, 510, 537 and 546 etc.
51. Mbh. Ādi, 1.35, and 111.10-11; Viṣṇu Purāṇa v. 1.19. Also Amarakośa, Svarâdi Kāṇḍa 11.
52. vii. 4.13:

 रक्षाम इति यैरुक्तं राक्षसास्ते भवन्तु वः ।
 यक्षाम इति यैरुक्तं यक्षा एव भवन्तु वः ॥

 Cf. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 45.20 (ii):

 खादाम इति ये चोचुस्ते यक्षा यक्षणाद्द्विज ।

53. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, Prt, ii, p. 5.
54. See supra notes 6 and 7. In the Kathâsaritsâgara also a Yakṣa named Supratika is turned into a Piśâca by the curse of Kubera. See no. 75. infra.
55. V. 57.3 (ii):

 भुजङ्गयक्षगन्धर्वप्रबुद्धकमलोत्पलम् ।

56. i. 34.18.:

नैशानि सर्वभूतानि विचरन्ति यतस्ततः ।
यक्षराक्षस संघाश्च रौद्राश्च पिशिताशनाः ॥

57. xi. 96:

यक्षरक्षः पिशाचान्नं मद्यं मांसं सुराऽऽसवम् ।
तद्ब्राह्मणेन नात्तव्यं देवानामश्नता हविः ॥

58. Bhīṣma 82.44(i):

राक्षसाश्च पिशाचाश्च तथान्ये पिशिताशनाः ।

59. Sauptika, 8.127 and 131-133:

तथादृश्यन्त रक्षांसि पिशाचाश्च पृथग्विधाः ।
खादन्तो नरमांसानि पिबन्तः शोणितानि च ॥
पीत्वा च शोणितं हृष्टाः प्रानृत्यन्गणशोऽपरे ।
इदं वरमिदं मेध्यमिदं स्वाद्विति चाब्रुवन् ॥
मेदोमज्जास्थिरक्तानां वसानां च भृशाशिताः ।
परमांसानि खादन्तः क्रव्यादा मांसजीविनः ॥
वसां चाप्यपरे पीत्वा पर्यधावन्विकृक्षिलाः ।
नानावक्रास्तथा रौद्राः क्रव्यादाः पिशिताशनाः ॥

Also Droṇa, 48. 47-48 and 51.
And Vāmana P., 9. 41-42.

60. Anuśāsana, 90.16:

तिलदाने च क्रव्यादा ये च क्रोधवशा गणाः ।
यातुधानाः पिशाचाश्च विप्रलुम्पन्ति तद्धविः ॥

61. Sabhā, 16.38:

ते चतुष्पथनिक्षिप्ते जरानामाथ राक्षसी ।
जग्राह मनुजव्याघ्र मांसशोणितभोजना ॥

62. Vana, 219. 51-52.

63. Vana, 219. 51:

आविशन्ति च यं यक्षाः पुरुषं कालपर्यये ।
उन्माद्यति स तु क्षिप्रं ज्ञेयो यक्षग्रहस्तु सः ॥

64. Mārkaṇḍeya P., 8. 108(i):

पिशाचभूतवेतालडाकिनीयक्षसंकुलम् ।

65. *Ibid.*, 43.5:

दृष्ट्वा प्रेतपिशाचादीन् गन्धर्वनगराणि च।
सुवर्णवर्णान् वृक्षांश्च नवमासान् स जीवति॥

Vāyu P. Uttara, 8. 281-282:

मधुमांसौदनैर्दध्ना तिलचूर्णसुरासवैः।
धूपैर्हरिद्रकृशरैस्तैलभद्रगुडौदनैः॥
कृष्णानि चैव वासांसि धूपाः समनसस्तथा।
एवं युक्ताः सुबलयस्तेषां वै पर्वसन्धिषु॥

Also Brahmāṇḍa P., ii. 3.7. 409-411.

66. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8.191:

यक्षा दृष्ट्वा पिबन्तीह नृणां मांसमसृग्वसाम्।
रक्षांस्यनुप्रवेशेन पिशाचाः परपीडनैः॥

67. iii. 20. 19-21:

विससर्जात्मनः कायं नाभिनन्दंस्तमोमयम्।
जगृहुर्यक्षरक्षांसि रात्रिं क्षुत्तृट्समुद्भवाम्॥
क्षुत्तृड्भ्यामुपसृष्टास्ते तं जग्धुमभिदुद्रुवुः॥
मा रक्षतैनं जक्षध्वमित्यूचुः क्षुत्तृडर्दिताः॥
देवस्तानाह संविग्नो मा मां जक्षत रक्षत।
अहो मे यक्षरक्षांसि प्रजा यूयं बभूविथ॥

68. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8.190:

यक्षाणां राक्षसानां च पौलस्त्यागस्त्ययश्च ये।
तेषां राजा महाराजः कुबेरो ह्यलकाधिपः॥

and Mbh. Udyoga, 16.33.

69. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8. 251-254:

254(ii): उपचारोपचारश्च उलूखल उलूखली।

70. Eng. Tr. 'The Ocean of Story', Tawney C.H. 10 Vols. London 1924, Vol. ii, p. 52.

Also cf. Mbh. Vana, 297.20:

विरूपाक्षं महाकायं यक्षं तालसमुच्छ्रयम्।
ज्वलनार्कप्रतीकाशमधृष्यं पर्वतोपमम्॥

71. Vol. i, p. 76-77.

Particularly i. 7.35:

दिवा नैषां प्रभावोऽस्ति ध्वस्तानामर्कतेजसा ।
यक्षरक्षः पिशाचानां तेन हृष्यन्त्यमी निशि ॥

72. *Ibid.*, Vol. viii, p. 25.
73. *Ibid.*, Vol. vi, p. 118.
74. *Ibid.*, Vol. iii, p. 187 f.
75. *Ibid.*, Vol. i. p. 7.
76. Ed. Vreese K. De., Leiden 1936, vv. 208. 326; cf. Stein M.A. Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇi, Delhi 1961, Vol. i, p. 184, n. to v. 710.
77. Oppert Gustav, On the Original Inhabitants of Bhāratavarṣa or India, Reprint Delhi 1972, p. 455.
78. *Op. cit.*, p. 132 ff.
79. Vāmana P. Cr. ed. A.S. Gupta, Varanasi 1967, 23. 39-41:

तस्य क्षेत्रस्य रक्षार्थं ददौ स पुरुषोत्तमः ।
यक्षं च चन्द्रनामानं वासुकिं चापि पन्नगम् ॥
विद्याधरं शंकुकर्णं सुकेशिं राक्षसेश्वरम् ।
अजावनं च नृपतिं महादेवं च पावकम् ॥
एतानि सर्वतोऽभ्येत्य रक्षन्ति कुरुजांगलम् ।
अमीषां बलिनोऽन्ये च भृत्याश्चैवानुयायिनः ॥

80. Vana, 81.178:

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरम् रामह्रदानं च मचक्रुकस्य च ।
एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकम् पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥

81. SM., 1.14.
82. The verse is repeated in Mbh. Śalya, 53.24 too with प्रजापतेः as a variant of पितामहस्य.
83. The Vāmana P. gives Caturmukha in place of Macakruka in SM., 1.14(ib):

यदन्तरं रामह्रदाच्चतुर्मुखम् ।

84. Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vol. XIV, Reprint, Varanasi 1970, pp. 89-90 and 97-106.
85. SM., 13. 38-39. See n. 170. infra.
86. Śalya, 27. 19-24.
87. Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 49.
88. Bharadwaj O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, p. 176.
89. *Ibid.*
90. 18, 44, 53 and 67.

91. *Ibid.*, 18.67; and SM., 13. 24-26.
 The whole region is called यक्षमण्डल in Vāmana P. 18.59.
92. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 24-26.
93. See Sachau E.C., Alberuni's India, Reprint, Delhi 1964, Vol. 1, p. 240.
94. Marus have been called the Utkara of the Vedi of Kurukṣetra in the Taittirıya Āraṇyaka viii. 1.1.:

 देवा वै सत्रमासत । ····· तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत् । तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्ध आसीत् । तर्घ्नमुत्तरार्धः । परीणज्जघनार्धः । मरवः उत्करः ।

95. The definition given in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka covers a much bigger area and is roughly co-terminus with the present state of Haryana.
96. Dıghanikāya, Ed. Kashyap Bhikkhu J., 3 Vols. Nalanda 1958 Vol. iii Pāthika Vagga, p. 155 ff. Also Cf. Malalasekera, *op. cit.* p. 677.
97. Cf. Bharadwaj, O.P., *op. cit.* p. 160. The Varāha P. Cr. ed. Gupta A.S. Varanasi 1981, 81-83 mentions a hundred towns of Yakṣas on the Śataśṛṅga, a name used for the Shiwalik range.
98. ix. 3. 9. v. (verse) 3.
99. *Ibid.*, v. 4.
100. See Agrawal V.S., The Geographical Contents of the Mahāmāyūrī, Journal of the U.P. Historical Society, Vol. XV. Pt. 2, December 1942, p. 24-52.
101. *Ibid.*, p. 27. v. 15.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
103. *Ibid.*, p. 27. v. 18.
104. *Ibid.*, p. 28. v. 70.
105. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 27. v. 21.
107. *Ibid.*, p. 27. v. 23.
108. *Ibid.*, p. 28, v. 60.
109. Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Calcutta 1924, p. 395 f.
110. *Ibid.*, p. 27. v. 23.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 28, v. 56.
112. *Ibid.*, p. 28. v. 60.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 28. v. 57.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 28, v. 58.
115. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
116. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 44-45.
117. Mbh. Vana, 129. 6-8.
118. Winternitz Maurice, History of Indian Literature, Revised ed. Vol. ii, Delhi 1983, p. 371.
119. Ed. Kane P.V., Reprint Delhi 1973, Ch. V. p. 21 ··· पठ्यमान महामायूरी ··· Also Mookerji R.K., Harsha, 3rd. ed., Delhi 1965, p. 141.

120. See Bharadwaj O.P., *op. cit.*, pp. 149-165.
121. See Thaplyal Kiran Kumar, Inscriptions of the Maukharis, Later Guptas, Puṣpabhūtis and Yaśovarman of Kanauj, Delhi 1985, p. 186 11. 5-6. The first twelve lines of the two seals are identical, p. 188.
122. *Ibid.*, p. 182. LL 3-4.
123. Mookerji, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
124. Thaplyal, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
125. *Op. cit.*, p. 373.
126. Ch. iii, p. 49 f.
127. Mookerji, *op. cit.* p. 141.
128. Cf. Kane, *op. cit.* Notes on chapters i-iii, p. 200.
129. Mbh. Sabhā, 29. 4-5.
130. Cf. Agrawal V.S., Geographical Contents of Mahāmāyūrī, p. 35 n. 8, and Dasgupta K.K., A Tribal History of Ancient India, Calcutta 1974, p. 18.
131. Pūrvakhaṇḍa, ed. Sunder Lal Shastri, Varanasi 1960, p. 8,

यौधेयो नाम धाम संपदो जनपदः।

132. See Handiqui K.K., Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture, Sholapur 1949, p. 395.
133. Cf. Agrawal Jagannath, An Ancient Republic of the Punjab—The Yaudheya-gana, in Dr. M.S. Randhawa Fel. Vol. Chandigarh 1970, pp. 49-55, p. 54; Sahni Birbal, The Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India, Bombay 1955, p. 7 ff. and Allan John, A Catalogue of The Indian Coins in The British Museum, Reprint Oxford 1967, pp. cxl vii ff. and 265 ff. etc.
134. Agrawal, V.S., भारतीय कला, Reprint Varanasi 1987, p. 125.
135. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
136. Agrawala R.C., 'Early History and Archaeology of Haryana' in Haryana Studies in History and Culture, Kurukshetra 1968, p. 20.
137. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Deptt. of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Kurukshetra University, pp. 182-183, Plates xx and xxii.
138. Journal of U.P. Historical Society, Vol. xxiv-xxv, p. 191 f. (cited by Punia).
139. Agrawal R.C. in Haryana Studies, p. 26 f.
140. A.S.R. Vol. xiv. p. 97 ff.
141. Haryana Studies pp. 20-21.
142. Coomaraswamy A.K., A. History of Indian and Indonesian Art, London 1927, p. 32.
143. Kuṣāṇa Sculptures from Sanghol (1st-2nd century A.D.) Vol. i. ed. Gupta S.P. New Delhi, 1985, p. 116, fig. 1.
144. *Ibid.*, p. 118, fig. 7.
145. *Ibid.*, p. 119, fig. 8.
146. *Ibid.*, p. 123, fig. 20.

147. Shukla V.S., Some Terracotta Figurines from Sirsa (Haryana), Indological Studies (Essays in Memory of Shri S.P. Singhal) Delhi 1987, (pp. 79-86), p. 81. fig. 4.
148. भारतीय कला, p. 123.
149. Harṣacarita, Ch. iii. p. 43:

सुरालयशिलाघट्टनटङ्कनिकरनिकृत्ता इव व्यदीर्यन्त विपदः · · · · · · · ·

Also Cf. Devahuti D., Harsha—A Political Study, Oxford 1970, p. 57.

150. Mbh. Vana, 129. 8-10.
151. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 38 (ii)—48.
152. *Ibid.*, v. 44.
153. Vana, 129. 8 quoted supra.
154. SM., 13. 39 (ii):

तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणी लोकविश्रुता ॥

155. Vāyu P. (Venkateshwar Press edn.) Uttara, 8. 268 (i):

विष्टब्धाक्षा महाजिह्वा लेलिहाना ह्यदूखलाः

156. Vāmana P., SM., 13.48 (i):

दिवा मया ते कथितं रात्रौ भक्ष्यामि निश्चितम् ।

157. Mbh. Vana, 129.9:

युगन्धरे दधिप्राश्य उषित्वा चाच्युतस्थले ।
तद्वद् भूतालये स्नात्वा सपुत्रा वस्तुमर्हसि ॥

Vāmana P., SM., 13. 47. is identical but for इच्छसि in place of अर्हसि. Parui S.S. (Kurukṣetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa, Calcutta 1976. p. 77) agrees with this interpretation. Agrawal V.S. (Vāmana Purāṇa—A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 67) thinks curd or milk was eaten as a Prasāda in Yugandhara. According to him this Gāthā verse is open to many inferences. The interpretation accepted by us appears to suit the context better and finds support from Mbh. Karṇa, 30. 42 also:

युगन्धरे पयः पीत्वा प्रोष्य चाप्यच्युतस्थले ।
तद्वद् भूतिलये स्नात्वा कथं स्वर्गं गमिष्यति ॥

158. Vāmana P., SM., 12. 19-21 and 13. 11:

रन्तुकं च नरो दृष्ट्वा द्वारपालं महाबलम् ।
यक्षं समभिवाद्यैव तीर्थयात्रां समाचरेत् ॥

159. Bhārata Sāvitrī, three volumes, Delhi 1977, Vol. I, p. 259 f. and Vol. ii, p. 264.

160. e.g. Vana, 81. 184:

पांसवोऽपि कुरुक्षेत्रे वायुना समुदीरिताः ॥
अपि दुष्कृतकर्माणं नयन्ति परमां गतिम् ॥

161. e.g. Matsya P., 109. 3 :

पृथिव्यां नैमिषं पुण्यम् अन्तरिक्षे च पुष्करम् ।
त्रयाणामपि लोकानां कुरुक्षेत्रं विशिष्यते ॥

For religious importance of Kurukṣetra also see Lakṣmīdhara, Kṛtyakalpataru, Baroda, Vol. iii. pp. 175-79.

162. Cf. Bharadwaj O.P., Is there Kurukṣetra-Kutsana in the Mahābhārata? In 'Indological Studies' (Essays in Memory of Shri S.P. Singhal), New Delhi 1987, pp. 295-301.
163. Kantawala S.G., Cultural History from the Matsya Purāṇa, Baroda 1964, p. 191 f.
164. p. 27, v. 28 and v. 12.
165. 183. 63-66.
166. Kantawala, *op. cit.* p. 172.
167. Agrawala V.S., Matsya Purāṇa—A Study, Varanasi 1963, p. 279.
168. Agrawal, भारतीय कला, p. 127.
169. i. 78. 10 (i). Also cf. Avasthy A.B.L., गरुड पुराण–एक अध्ययन । Lucknow 1968, p. 256.
170. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 38 (ii)-39 (i):

ततो मुञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः ॥
उपोष्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्नुयात् ॥

171. Mbh. Vana, 80. 106-107 and variant readings under these verses.
172. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 24-26 and 28:

ततो गच्छेत विप्रेन्द्रा द्वारपालं त्वरन्तुकम् ।
तत्रोष्य रजनीमेकां स्नात्वा तीर्थवरे शुभे ॥
द्वितीयं पूजयेद्यत्र द्वारपालं प्रयत्नतः ।
ब्राह्मणान् भोजयित्वा च प्रणिपत्य क्षमापयेत् ॥
तव प्रसादाद्यक्षेन्द्र मुक्तो भवति किल्बिषैः ॥
सिद्धिर्मयाऽभिलषिता तया सार्धं भवाम्यहम् ।
एवं प्रसाद्य यक्षेन्द्रं ततः पञ्चनदं व्रजेत् ॥
कोटितीर्थानि रुद्रेण समाहृत्य यतः स्थितम् ।
तेन त्रैलोक्यविख्यातं कोटितीर्थं प्रचक्षते ॥

173. Sircar D.C., Śākta Pīṭhas, 2nd revised edn. Delhi 1973, p. 26.
174. *Ibid.*
175. *Ibid.*, pp. 26 and 30.
176. *Ibid.*
177. *Ibid.*
178. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
179. *Ibid.*, pp. 26 and 30.
180. *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 31, 36, 41, 51, 60, 63.
181. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
182. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
183. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
184. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
185. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
186. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
187. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

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Plate 2. Bhadas Yakṣa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XX



Plate 3. Hathin Yakṣa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XXII



Plate 4. Mahrauli Yakṣa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XIX C



Plate 5. Khokarakot Yakṣa and Yakṣī on the Lion Capital, reproduced from R. C. Agrawal, Plate 2



Plate 6. Paribhoga darśiṇī, reproduced from S. P. Gupta, p. 61/1



Plate 7. Yakṣārohī, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 55/7.1



Plate 8.

Darpaṇa-dhāriṇī, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 68/8



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Plate 9. Yakṣī holding lotus flowers, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 85/20

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